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THE TEACHER APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

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# THE TEACHER APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

## ABSTRACT

Teacher appraisal is one of the key educational issues of the 1980s and 1990s. Developments have been taking place at both national and local levels, and in the near future, many schools will be obliged to adopt some form of appraisal system. In setting the context for this research, attention is drawn to the purposes and types of appraisal, its major benefits and drawbacks, and the common features of existing schemes.

Most teacher appraisal schemes make the appraisal "interview" the focal activity, and therefore the effectiveness of the system, is dependent upon the quality of the interaction during the interview itself. Thus, the central aim of this research is to find out more about what goes on in such meetings.

In one school eleven case-study appraisal interviews were audio-taped, and intensive analysis of both "content" and "process" was applied. The methodology employed is primarily qualitative and interpretive in nature.

Each interview is described in detail, making extensive use of quotations where necessary. The evaluation of each encounter provides valuable insights into the behaviour of participants. Semi-structured interviews with staff from the study school afford additional data. A number of generalities and issues emerge, in relation to both interview content and process.

The results are enhanced by making use of certain theoretical concepts from the science of social psychology, including role theory, social psychological orientations, and interactionist perspectives.

The implications of this research are considered, in particular the need to train staff in the skills of appraisal interviewing. The characteristics of 'good practice' in a teacher appraisal interview are also discussed.

It is concluded that the behaviour of participants in a teacher appraisal interview is a function of role, relationship, personality, and the intricacies of transactional processes. A dramaturgical perspective provides an appropriate language for describing typical interview behaviour. A typology of teacher appraisal interviews is also developed.

Dramatic performances typically carry their meanings by speech. So also the drama of human existence seems to require speech. And by extension, the science of human affairs is largely a study of performative utterances.

Lyman and Scott, (1975), The Drama of Social Reality.



## CONTENTS

	Page Number
Chapter One      INTRODUCTION	1
Research Rationale	2
Structure of the Thesis	7
Chapter Two      THE BACKGROUND TO APPRAISAL	11
A Historical Perspective	12
Methods of Teacher Assessment	13
The Accountability Movement	17
Developments at National Level	18
Developments at Local Authority Level	22
Developments at Institutional Level	23
The Purpose of Appraisal	25
Benefits and Problems Associated with Teacher Appraisal Interviews	31
The Staff Appraisal Scheme at the Study School	33
Chapter Three    METHODOLOGY	38
Sociological Perspectives and Research Strategies	39
Case-Study Methodology	39c
Methodological Dilemmas	41
Research Procedure	46
Chapter Four     THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES FOR THE STUDY OF DYADS	64
Introduction	65
Role Theory	68

Social Psychological Theories	74
Interaction Theories	78
Comparison and Integration	87
Chapter Five     INTERVIEW ANALYSIS	92
Interview 1	93
Interview 2	105
Interview 2a	116
Interview 3	133
Interview 4	144
Interview 5	158
Interview 6	166
Interview 7	183
Interview 8	201
Interview 9	220
Interview 10	239
Interview 11	257
Chapter Six     GENERALITIES AND ISSUES RELATING TO CONTENT	278
Content Generalities	281
Content Issues	291
Chapter Seven   GENERALITIES AND ISSUES RELATING TO PROCESS	311
Process Generalities	312
Process Issues	324
Chapter Eight   UMBRELLA GENERALITIES AND ISSUES	341
Chapter Nine    THEORY REVISITED	369

Chapter Ten	RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS	395
	The Need for Training	396
	Training Techniques	402
	Good Practice in the Appraisal Interview	408
Chapter Eleven	CONCLUSION	435
	Research Synopsis	436
	A Typology of Teacher Appraisal Interviews	441
	APPENDICES	447
	REFERENCES	458

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page Number
3.1 Categories for Interaction Process Analysis (after Bales)	55
3.2 Behaviour Categories (after Honey)	55
3.3 Interview Analysis Form	58
5.1.1 Content Classification for Interview 1	98
5.1.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 1	99
5.1.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 1	101
5.1.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 1	103
5.2.1 Content Classification for Interview 2	109
5.2.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 2	110
5.2.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 2	112
5.2.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 2	114
5.2a.1 Content Classification for Interview 2a	121
5.2a.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 2a	122
5.2a.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 2a	125
5.2a.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 2a	131
5.3.1 Content Classification for Interview 3	136
5.3.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 3	137
5.3.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 3	140
5.3.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 3	142
5.4.1 Content Classification for Interview 4	147
5.4.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 4	149
5.4.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 4	153
5.4.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 4	156
5.5.1 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 5	159
5.6.1 Content Classification for Interview 6	172
5.6.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 6	173
5.6.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 6	175
5.6.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 6	180
5.7.1 Content Classification for Interview 7	189
5.7.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 7	190
5.7.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 7	194
5.7.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 7	198
5.8.1 Content Classification for Interview 8	208
5.8.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 8	209
5.8.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 8	213
5.8.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 8	217
5.9.1 Content Classification for Interview 9	225
5.9.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 9	226
5.9.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 9	229
5.9.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 9	236
5.10.1 Content Classification for Interview 10	244
5.10.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 10	245
5.10.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 10	248
5.10.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 10	254
5.11.1 Content Classification for Interview 11	265
5.11.2 Content/Time Analysis for Interview 11	266
5.11.3 Verbal Behaviour Profile for Interview 11	270
5.11.4 Interview Analysis Forms for Interview 11	272



6.1	Summary Data on Content Classification according to level	282
6.2	Summary Data: Content/Time Analysis	284
6.3	Expected Frequencies for Content/Time Categories	288
6.4	Contingency Table for Content/Time Categories	288
7.1	Verbal Interaction Data Sheet	313
7.2	Summary Data for Verbal Interaction	314
7.3	Summary Data: Interview Analysis Forms	317
7.4	Data on the Significance of Differences between Category Means for Appraisers and Appraisees	321
8.1	Summary Data	343
9.1	Functional Roles for Appraisers	372
9.2	Functional Roles for Appraisees	373
9.3	Comparison of Benne and Sheats Functional Roles with Bales Interaction Categories	376
9.4	Dimensions of Role-Relationship	378
9.5	Application of Dimensions of Role-Relationship to Sample Interviews	378
9.6	Personality Trait Dimensions (after Driskell, Hogan and Salas, 1987)	381
9.7	"Task" Classification (after Driskell, Hogan and Salas, 1987)	381
9.8	Personality Trait Dimensions of Sample Appraisers and Appraisees	383
10.1	Peer Counselling Development Group Skills (after Elliott-Kemp, 1981)	405
10.2	Proforma for One Appraisee	417
10.3	Comparison of Judgemental and Counselling Roles in Performance Appraisal (after Cummings and Schwab)	431
11.1	The Johari Awareness Model	440
11.2	A Typology of Teacher Appraisal Interviews	443

## Chapter One

### INTRODUCTION

## Chapter One INTRODUCTION

Within the next few years - possibly months - many teachers will be obliged to participate in appraisal interviews. In industry and commerce a growing number of managers and employees are familiar with such interviews, and most can claim first-hand experience as either appraiser or appraisee, or both.

For teachers - particularly those charged with the responsibility for conducting appraisal interviews - there will be, questions about how the event should be 'managed'; a desire to reproduce 'normal' or 'typical' behaviour; fears that the meeting will not run smoothly; and entreaties for guidance.

What happens in a teacher appraisal interview therefore, is a matter of some concern, and teachers will need to know how to approach this new experience. The primary purpose of this research is to increase our knowledge about what takes place in these encounters. More specifically, the reasons for this investigation are itemised as follows:

### RESEARCH RATIONALE

In the vast majority of appraisal systems, both in schools and in industry, the INTERVIEW is the kernel of the entire procedure. When referring to the 62 schools visited by the Suffolk Education Department appraisal team, their report (1985), stated:

Every scheme has 'an interview' as a central part of the process - the nature of the interview varies from a general discussion to a dialogue of some rigour - and about half the schemes investigated have teacher self-appraisal as an agenda item in the interview.

With the interview as the focal activity, the effectiveness of the appraisal system is dependent upon the quality of the interaction during the interview itself.

. . . appraisal stands or falls by the quality of the appraisal interview.

Stewart (1977)

It is generally agreed that the experience of sitting down with one other person to discuss job performance is the most valued aspect of the whole procedure. Clearly, any descriptive, analytical examination, must therefore "zoom in" on the interview itself. Yet, ironically, the confidential nature of the discussion serves to conceal the event from the researcher's lens.

There is very little existing research evidence concerning the behaviour of participants in teacher appraisal interviews, and, perhaps more surprisingly, this is also true of the situation in industry. As Randell (1974) observes:

Writing in this field is based on assertion rather than fact.

Recent concern in industry with 'data-based personnel management' rests upon the assumption that decisions made about human behaviour at work should be based on scientifically gathered information. It is argued that the evidence provided by research should be used to inform management practice. I would suggest that much of what we



do in our schools every day is based upon commonsense judgements, drawn from experience rather than factual evidence. This is especially so in the use of interviews as ways of arriving at assessments about teachers.

The entire field of teacher evaluation has suffered from a surplus of opinion and a shortage of evidence.

Levin (1979)

The second justification for this study is that there is a gap to be filled in our knowledge of teacher appraisal interviews.

An appraisal interview is a type of 'meeting'. It is an episode in interpersonal communication that will play an increasingly vital part in the management of schools. The importance of effective communication in organisations is well established:

The problem of communication is one that exercises many minds. It almost has publicity value; it is certain to be mentioned in any discussion on the principles of management . . .

Sprout (1958)

In the educational literature a great deal has been written about classroom observation, but very little about the observation of meetings. Yet viewpoints are formed, and decisions are reached, in appraisal meetings which have profound effects on the organisation and the people who study and work in it. The processes by which agreements are made; the content of discussions; and the kind of behaviour engaged in by participants; are of considerable relevance to education managers wishing to improve the quality of communication. Williams (1984), argues the need for research in a similar vein:

. . . if you want to improve individual . . . performance in meetings then observing and analysing what is happening is the first stage in bringing about improvement.

Staff appraisal has become one of the key educational issues of the last decade. The White Paper "Better Schools" (DES 1985), stated quite clearly that the Government believed that the formal appraisal of the performance of all teachers was necessary. As a statement of intent which resulted, six years later, in regulations which made appraisal for all teachers compulsory, it can now be seen to have been one of the most significant proposals in the whole publication. In his speech to the 'North of England Conference' in 1985, Sir Keith Joseph (former Secretary of State for Education), made this remark:

It is sometimes said that it is impossible to evaluate the quality of teaching. I am not persuaded of this. Teaching is as much an art as a science, but ours would be a poor society if we shrank from making evaluations and judgements in these and other practical arts.

The 1986 Education Act (No.2) gives the Secretary of State reserve powers to require Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to appraise their teachers on a regular basis, in "accordance with such requirements as may be prescribed."

Government proposals in recent years have generated a great deal of debate, and the reaction from teachers' associations has not always been favourable, especially when the issue of teacher appraisal became enmeshed in the negotiations over pay and conditions of service in the mid-1980s. At a conference on appraisal in Sheffield in March 1986, speakers' descriptions of Government intentions

included:

. . . an expensive, unnecessary, and punitive process of teacher surveillance.

. . . an ill thought-out political gut reaction to popular demands.

Many professional associations have produced statements (National Union of Teachers, 1981; Assistant Masters and Mistresses association, 1985), that support an appraisal procedure providing that it is non-threatening and aimed at enhancing teachers' professional development.

In 1986 the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) recommended a pilot study, and proposals from six LEAs were accepted. The culmination of this activity represents the most important document on appraisal to date: the Report of the National Steering Group on the School Teacher Appraisal Pilot Study (DES, 1989). The significance of this document lies in the fact that it received widespread approval from all sectors of the education service

While discussion has been taking place at national level and pilot studies have been underway in six LEAs, some individual schools are already running their own staff appraisal schemes. There can be no doubt that the burgeoning interest in teacher appraisal, and its impending implementation nationwide, adds urgency to the need to conduct research in this field.

Perhaps the most important reason why some study of behaviour in



teacher appraisal interviews is desirable is that, in the absence of any description of what makes a successful encounter, they are more likely to be conducted badly. The consensus view is that appraisal interviews are not easy to do well:

It is the most complex and difficult kind of interview to conduct.

Fletcher, J. (1973)

There is wide agreement that appraisals of job performance and of career potential are among the most essential and difficult tasks in any scheme of systematic management development and career planning.

Wilson (1972)

A poorly handled appraisal interview can be a great demotivator; it can build up resentment; it can create conflict. There is a pressing need to find out what represents "good practice", in order that much needed training can be based upon evidence rather than intuition.

## STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The methodology employed in the intensive analysis of a small sample of case-study interviews from one school is described in Chapter Three. The research techniques applied are essentially descriptive, and interpretive, and rely heavily, but not exclusively, on qualitative data.

The interaction of a two person group (dyad) in an appraisal interview is a complex phenomenon. The objective analysis of these

encounters presents a number of methodological dilemmas which are also discussed in this chapter. For example, illuminative research gives emphasis to describing "actors'" accounts, but these are subject to the biasing effects that result from, amongst other things, the researcher's subjectivity. It becomes necessary therefore to utilise further data provided by "respondents" in the study school. This chapter focusses on the methodological difficulties of ensuring that as accurate an account as possible emerges from the data.

Appraisal interviews take place within a context. This includes the culture and policies of the study school, and the supra-system of which the institution forms a part. Chapter Two addresses contextual influences by dealing with, for example, developments in appraisal at national and local levels, and the pervasive effect of the accountability movement in bringing to the fore the issue of school effectiveness. In addition, this chapter offers a definition of appraisal; describes the features of existing schemes; and outlines the benefits and problems associated with teacher appraisal.

The substantive presentation of the results of this research requires detailed accounts of the case-study interviews. Since each interview is a unique encounter, it is described and evaluated discretely in Chapter Five. In the analysis a crucial separation is made between the 'content' of the interview ('what' is said), and the 'process' of each interview ('how' it is communicated).

Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight assemble and collate the data laid

out in Chapter Five; and - maintaining the distinction between 'content' and 'process' - identify a series of emerging 'generalities' and 'issues'. These chapters aim to highlight those features of teacher appraisal interviews which are 'typical' and 'significant'.

The value of empirical research is considerably enhanced when it can be set alongside existing theoretical approaches. Chapters Four and Nine provide the theoretical framework with which to locate, interpret, and integrate the research findings.

The contribution of this research lies in the light it sheds on the behaviour of participants in the appraisal interview. The implications of this relate to the need for training and the identification of good practice - matters which are considered in detail in Chapter Ten.

## SUMMARY

Research into the teacher appraisal interview is necessary because:

1. It is the central activity in the appraisal process.
2. There is little existing research evidence.
3. As one form of meeting, effective communication is of legitimate concern to the school manager.

4. Teacher appraisal is one of the key educational issues of the 1980s and 1990s.

5. An appraisal interview is difficult to do well - there is a need to assist training with the identification of good practice.

The specific aims of this research are as follows:

1. To provide a 'setting' for the research in order that the appraisal interview can be seen in its wider context.
2. To describe the subject matter of a sample of appraisal interviews.
3. To analyse the process of interaction between the participants.
4. To validate these findings by making use of 'actor' and 'respondent' accounts.
5. To offer some generalities on typical appraisal interview behaviour and to highlight salient issues.
6. To theorise from the data by drawing on established theoretical perspectives from the science of social psychology.
7. To examine the implications of this research both in terms of training in the skills of appraisal interviewing and the identification of good practice.

## Chapter Two

### THE BACKGROUND TO APPRAISAL



## Chapter Two THE BACKGROUND TO APPRAISAL

### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Public issues relating to teacher effectiveness did not arise until pupils were required to go to school. A Socrates talking in the market place enticed those who wished to listen and engage in disputation. An effective teacher was one who attracted the students. The University of Paris, founded in the 10th century, utilised a similar method. To survive, a professor had to be able to attract students, from whom fees were extracted directly. The grammar schools that emerged at the end of the Middle Ages were private institutions with a demand for education far in excess of the supply. In such a situation there was no public pressure to evaluate teachers.

Charles Hoole, a master of an English grammar school, published a series of pamphlets in 1659, (reproduced in 1868), on how to run a school. The discussion implied that if a school was correctly managed then the pupils would have full opportunities to learn, and any deficiencies were the result of pupil laziness or disinterest. The idea that learning at school was entirely within the volition of the student persisted until the mid-20th century; although Pestalozzi (1827), had rebuked teachers for "blaming" the child.

When the view became accepted that the teacher and learning conditions were in part contributors towards pupil achievement, the criteria for teacher effectiveness changed. This was first seen in

the "payment-by-results" system where teachers were paid according to attendance, and an assessment made by school inspectors based on the results of pupil tests. Schools became "cramming" institutions and after considerable public outcry the system was abolished after 40 years in 1902. The teacher emerged as someone who could influence not only learning in the classroom but the over all development of each child.

The prevailing view now is that pupil learning is a function of many variables, for example: genetic endowment, the disposition of the pupil, parental involvement, and learning conditions. Included in any such list is the "Teacher" - an element which is now considered the key to organising pedagogy and learning.

#### METHODS OF TEACHER ASSESSMENT

##### 1. Assessment of pupil performance

An extremely common and well developed method of teacher appraisal in the United States is to attempt to measure teacher effectiveness by some system of assessing pupil performance. The major problem is to select those effects which can be attributed to teacher performance. This method has not been a formal part of teacher assessment in Britain since payment-by-results, although covertly, the performance of pupils in public examinations has not been ignored. It remains to be seen whether the assessment data provided for by the 1988 Education Act will be used in this way.

## 2. The Observation of Teachers

Early research work on teacher effectiveness attempted to relate teacher behaviour traits to pupil achievement. Lesson observation focused on the importance of process rather than product measures. Efforts have been made to break down teaching into a set of component competencies. It could be argued that it is possible to determine, in the broadest terms, areas of teacher action that contribute towards effective teaching, for example:

- a) Planning
- b) Subject knowledge
- c) Classroom 'climate'
- d) Interpersonal skills

However, evaluating teaching in this way conceptualises it as a simple technology which ignores imagination and reflexive thought about the teacher's actions. Furthermore, the effect of "context" on teacher effectiveness is well documented. For example, McKenna (1983) argued strongly that considerations of the effect of community, school objectives, resources, etc. all be taken into account in the appraisal of teachers.

Techniques that rely less on inference and intuition have been developed by making use of rating schedules, sign systems, and category systems, (Flanders 1977). The apparent precision has a certain political attractiveness but reservations over the selection of criteria and the process of making judgements remain. (Tom, 1984).



### 3. Assessing Teacher Knowledge

Some schemes of teacher assessment are based upon some test of the teacher's understanding of the subject taught and pedagogical knowledge, for example the National Teacher Examinations in the United States. There is much controversy over this method, not least because there is no adequate evidence (Tom, 1984), to link teacher knowledge with teacher effectiveness.

### 4. Appraisal Interviews

In the United States appraisal interviews have been used as part of a programme of summative appraisal, for example the Teacher Perceiver Interview. In Britain they have been used for periodic evaluation as a basis for professional development rather than summative appraisal. Interviews have often been conducted by senior staff in schools: to deal with redeployment, boost morale, or promote curriculum review and institutional self-evaluation. As already stated in Chapter One, it is the central aim of this research to find out more about what takes place in these encounters when they form the key activity of a formal appraisal scheme.

The informal, ad hoc, and often ill-informed appraisal of teachers has always been with us - it takes place on a day-to-day basis in schools. Outside of education more rigorous performance appraisal developed during the 1950s and, through the work of people like Drucker (1955), it became common place in many commercial organisations in the 1960s, and is also now well established in the

Civil Service and the Armed Forces. Formal teacher appraisal has existed in America and Scandinavia for over 30 years but in Britain it is a much more recent phenomenon.

Traditionally, the evaluation of teachers has been a difficult matter - not least because there is little agreement on what constitutes "teaching". What exactly happens in classrooms depends to a large extent on how the school is organised, the structure of the curriculum, the expectations of parents, and the social context of education. There is, however, broad consensus as to what "effect" teachers should be having: pupils should be learning the subject matter, (which consists of information, skills and attitudes), of the National Curriculum. At the same time pupils should be helped to recognise their increasing competence, feel better about themselves as individuals, become useful and co-operative members of society, develop more responsibility, improve in their ability to solve problems, and develop their independence.

. . . effective teaching requires the ability to implement a very large number of diagnostic, instructional, managerial, and therapeutic skills. Effective teachers not only must be able to do a large number of things; they must also be able to recognise which of the many things they know how to do applies at a given moment and be able to follow through by performing the behaviour effectively.

Brophy and Everston (1976)

Thus it is not only very difficult to "measure" teacher performance but the history of teacher assessment has confirmed that there is no one simple and valid measure. Adelman (1989) has argued that valid and reliable criteria to assess teachers can most effectively be determined by consortia of 30 or more teachers engaged in

collaborative self-evaluation through a process of action-research.

### THE ACCOUNTABILITY MOVEMENT

In the context of performance appraisal, accountability relates to the organisation's need to ensure that employees are engaged in work which is consistent with the institution's overall objectives. In America, concepts of "accountability" and "quality assurance", (a concern for the effectiveness of schools), filtered down into schools during the 1960s and 1970s. Local communities began to exercise their right to scrutinise schools with far reaching consequences for individual teachers. In California, for example, legislation requires that school boards evaluate their educators yearly and provide recommendations for improvement, (Borich, 1977).

The much more advanced state of teacher appraisal in the United States provides a model for the U.K., and prompted some members of the Suffolk team to make visits in 1985. However, the influence on appraisal practices in British schools has come as much from procedures used in industry as it has from practices in other countries.

The demand to evaluate the performance of teachers is tied up closely with both the concept of accountability and the changing political and economic circumstances of the 1970s and 1980s. Before 1970, an air of confidence and a period of expansion in the education sector provided little cause for concern. However, the economic crises of the 1970s encouraged the widespread belief that



it was education that was letting Britain down, by taking the edge off her economic competitiveness. The immediate response of the Department of Education and Science (DES) was to set up the Assessment of Performance Unit (APU) in 1974 to monitor schools and to provide a general picture of standards in education. The key expression of concern came in 1976 with the Callaghan Ruskin College speech, which opened up a "Great Debate" on standards in schools, and gave real prominence to the question of whether the needs of the nation were being adequately met by the education service.

The 1980s saw increased efforts to promote accountability, and, of great significance to the teaching profession, a change in the popular mood towards education over the decade. There was growing suspicion that schools were inefficient and ineffective, and, as a result, schools were encouraged to inspect themselves. By 1982 two-thirds of all Local Education Authorities in England and Wales had been involved in the development of schemes for school-based review, although none made provision for the appraisal of individual teachers. The focus was on institutional, not individual accountability. None the less, this evaluative activity has stimulated some schools to look at the appraisal of teachers and, most importantly, helped to develop a "climate" where the introduction of systematic appraisal is feasible.

#### DEVELOPMENTS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Whilst accountability has become a demand in education, the service is being called upon to demonstrate "value for money" in an era of

financial stringency. With regard to the monitoring of teacher performance the White Paper: "Teaching Quality" (DES 1983), paragraph 92 states:

The Government welcomes recent moves towards self-assessment by schools and teachers, and believe these should help to improve school standards and curricula. But employers can manage their teacher force effectively only if they have accurate knowledge of each teacher's performance. The Government believe that for this purpose formal assessment of teacher performance is necessary and should be based on classroom visiting by the teacher's head of department, and an appraisal of both pupils' work and of the teacher's contribution to the life of the school.

Although this issue was addressed by Houghton in the early 1970s, the employers' position on appraisal was made clear in the proposals put forward by LEA representatives in November 1984 entitled: "A New Remuneration Structure for Teachers", (Times Educational Supplement, 23-11-84). Objective six states:

To provide recognition and reward to teachers whose professional achievements are outstanding whilst ensuring that every teacher achieves a satisfactory standard of performance.

The proposals go on to explain how every teacher is expected to participate in an open and continuous process of professional appraisal rooted in performance in the school and conducted by the senior colleague to whom the teacher is accountable. It is envisaged that this process will culminate every year in a professional development discussion, with the objective of identifying opportunities for, and obstacles to, professional growth. A nationally agreed "prompt sheet" would be used to guide but not constrain the discussion, and an "assessment profile form" will record the outcome of the assessment.



The Secretary of State's readiness to impose a national system of teacher assessment by legislation was revealed at the North of England conference at Chester in January 1985. The notion of linking pay to satisfactory assessment met with considerable criticism from professional associations, as has the idea that assessment is the way of getting rid of "weak" teachers. The use of the word "assessment" had different connotations. It indicated that the process was done "to" the teacher rather than "by" him or her. It suggested that the teacher was the "object" rather than the "subject" of review and that the process was "hard" rather than "soft".

At a conference on staff appraisal organised by the "Industrial Society" in 1985 the Permanent Secretary at the DES, Mr David Hancock, adopted a much "softer" line and emphasised that appraisal should not be seen as a threat but as a series of opportunities. In describing the type of appraisal system the DES wants he said:

. . . one that is constructive, supportive and developmental.

At the same conference the Director of Education for the Industrial Society urged the Government to consult on assessment and not impose an inflexible and unpopular system.

The Suffolk Report (1985) argued for a system based on openness and a positive identification of strengths as well as acknowledgement of weaknesses. However the report recognised the advantages of a national scheme:

The scheme's greatest potential advantage is that it would

provide a vehicle for a cohesive pattern of national education which in some instances could flow all the way down from the Secretary of State, through the LEAs, to every classroom teacher.

The appraisal debate has produced a considerable response from the teacher associations also. The National Union of Teachers (NUT) has promoted approaches to appraisal which would further teachers' professional growth and effectiveness. These ideas were embodied in "A Fair Way Forward" (1981), which proposed that teachers should have opportunities for career development discussions on a regular basis. In a later policy statement the NUT concluded:

The Union does not believe there is a simple answer to promoting teacher effectiveness. To improve teaching quality in schools as a whole requires a more comprehensive and multi-faceted approach than has so far been apparent. Such an approach must include assessment which is non-threatening and is supportive of teachers' development and which addressed itself to the central requirement of a developing and relevant curriculum for every child.

NUT (1985)

The first national framework for teacher appraisal emerged in 1989 with the Report of the National Steering Group on the School Teacher Appraisal Pilot Study (DES 1989). This originated with Circular 6-84 which proposed financial support for preparatory research and development with two phases. Phase one was aimed at establishing "procedural readiness" with pilot studies in Birmingham and Suffolk. In phase two these two LEAs were expanded into a consortium of six. The schemes developed by the six pilot LEAs were based upon the principles set out in the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) Report of the Appraisal/Training Working Group of June 1986. The National Steering Group Report sets out national recommendations for teacher appraisal. It recognises that

responsibility for appraisal should lie with LEAs and suggests a target date of July 1994 for full implementation. However, in October 1989 the Secretary of State postponed the introduction of a national appraisal scheme, in recognition of the mounting pressure on schools to cope with other reforms. The 1986 Education Act had given the Secretary of State powers to make the appraisal of teachers compulsory. In September 1990 the Secretary of State, Mr John MacGregor, accepted most of the proposed National Steering Group's recommendations, although concerns remain about the access of governors to confidential statements, and about resourcing levels. He said that it would be up to individual Local Education Authorities to decide whether and at what pace to introduce appraisal. However, in November 1990, the new Secretary of State, Kenneth Clarke, withdrew the earlier proposal and announced that appraisal would become compulsory from September 1991. His scheme utilises a two year cycle with classroom observation on at least two occasions followed by an interview and a review meeting in the following year.

At national level just about every educational pressure group has something to say about teacher appraisal. The issue is addressed by a plethora of reports, books, and research from groups or individuals. As the first attempt to provide a register of existing schemes a significant contribution has been made by a two year research project sponsored by the Leverhulme Trust in 1984 at the School of Education of the Open University which has resulted in a number of publications: Turner and Clift (1985, 1987, 1988).



## DEVELOPMENTS AT LOCAL AUTHORITY LEVEL

In an address to the Council of Local Authorities' Conference in 1984 the Secretary of State clearly emphasised the need for LEAs to grasp the issue of realistic teacher appraisal:

There seems to be a general acceptance that clearer leadership by the LEAs - a more positive management style if you prefer that language - is needed if we are to do our best by our children. To my mind it is an absolute requirement that we develop arrangements for the regular appraisal of the professional performance of each teacher.

Up to the mid 1980s some Authorities had promoted appraisal through management courses but on the whole activity at this level had been minimal. The Suffolk (1985) team noted that there was very little involvement of LEAs via advisers/inspectors and a lack of coherence in any planning.

However, as already mentioned, following the ACAS report and the Educational Support Grant (ESG) funding of six pilot schemes in Croydon, Cumbria, Salford, Somerset, Suffolk, and Newcastle, extensive developmental work has taken place in these LEAs. Most LEAs are also in the process of preparing policies or guidelines following the Secretary of State's announcement in November 1990.

## DEVELOPMENTS AT INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

One of the most significant facts about appraisal is that whilst debate has often been prolonged, and implementation delayed, at national and County levels, development of appraisal systems has been getting underway with growing enthusiasm at the school level.

Evaluation of teachers springs from two main sources: external pressure for accountability and internal desire for improvement.

O'Mahony (1985)

Some schools had developed appraisal schemes long before Government pronouncements on the quality of teaching and accountability. Some schemes were started as early as the mid 1970s.

The Turner and Clift (1985, 1987) reviews represent the most up to date survey. They have classified 56 pioneer schemes in terms of their salient characteristics. The main findings are as follows.

The majority of schools (46 out of 56) in the register are comprehensive and there are only 5 primary schools. Most schemes were initiated either by the Headteacher or a senior member of staff and the majority have been introduced since 1980. Most schemes were set up in a non-threatening atmosphere, participation is often on a voluntary basis, and the whole approach is oriented towards professional development.

The "focus" of the schemes vary, some being geared to a highly individualistic approach whilst others form part of the whole school management and professional development process. Most of the schemes are designed for formative appraisal - the improvement of practice often by identifying in-service training needs. In the majority of cases the principal method is the appraisal interview - often delegated to middle management. Some schemes make use of lesson observation. Proformas, although varied in format, are widely used. The most common type of record kept is an agreed statement of the appraisal interview and in only two cases are

records open to others. Commonly appraisal takes place annually. The most frequently cited change that occurs as a result of appraisal is some kind of in-service training although many schools claim that little or nothing has resulted from appraisal.

Turner's (1985) classification of the data identifies three kinds of scheme:

1. Interview based schemes: An annual interview, usually 30 to 60 minutes in length is conducted by a senior member of staff.
2. Delegated staff appraisal: Heads of Department appraise staff using lesson observation and proformas. The outcomes are communicated to the Headteacher.
3. Departmental Review: A systematic and thorough review of a department, involving classroom observation, interviews with staff, and examination of pupils' work.

#### THE PURPOSE OF APPRAISAL

Attitudes towards assessment are ambivalent. We approve of it if the evaluation is favourable and dismiss it if the outcome is mainly critical. Any kind of teacher evaluation will suffer from the same kind of ambiguity and yet we are addicted to the hope that others will think highly of us. Similarly, but perhaps even more so because it is so personal, performance appraisal through interview can provide both sweet and bitter experiences. It has many connotations - it attracts many myths and fears. Is it for staff development or staff control?

Definitions tell us something about our perceptions of a particular subject and, more importantly, inform us about purposes. So how has appraisal been defined?



A procedure which helps the collecting, checking, sharing, giving and using of information collected from and about people at work.

Randell (1974)

An attempt to think clearly about each person's performance and future prospects against the background of the total work situation.

Mayfield (1960)

At their simplest, appraisal systems enable the people who work in an organisation to plan and control their work better, to learn from their mistakes and profit from their success.

Stewart (1977)

A systematic review of performance and potential as part of a full scheme of personal and professional staff development.

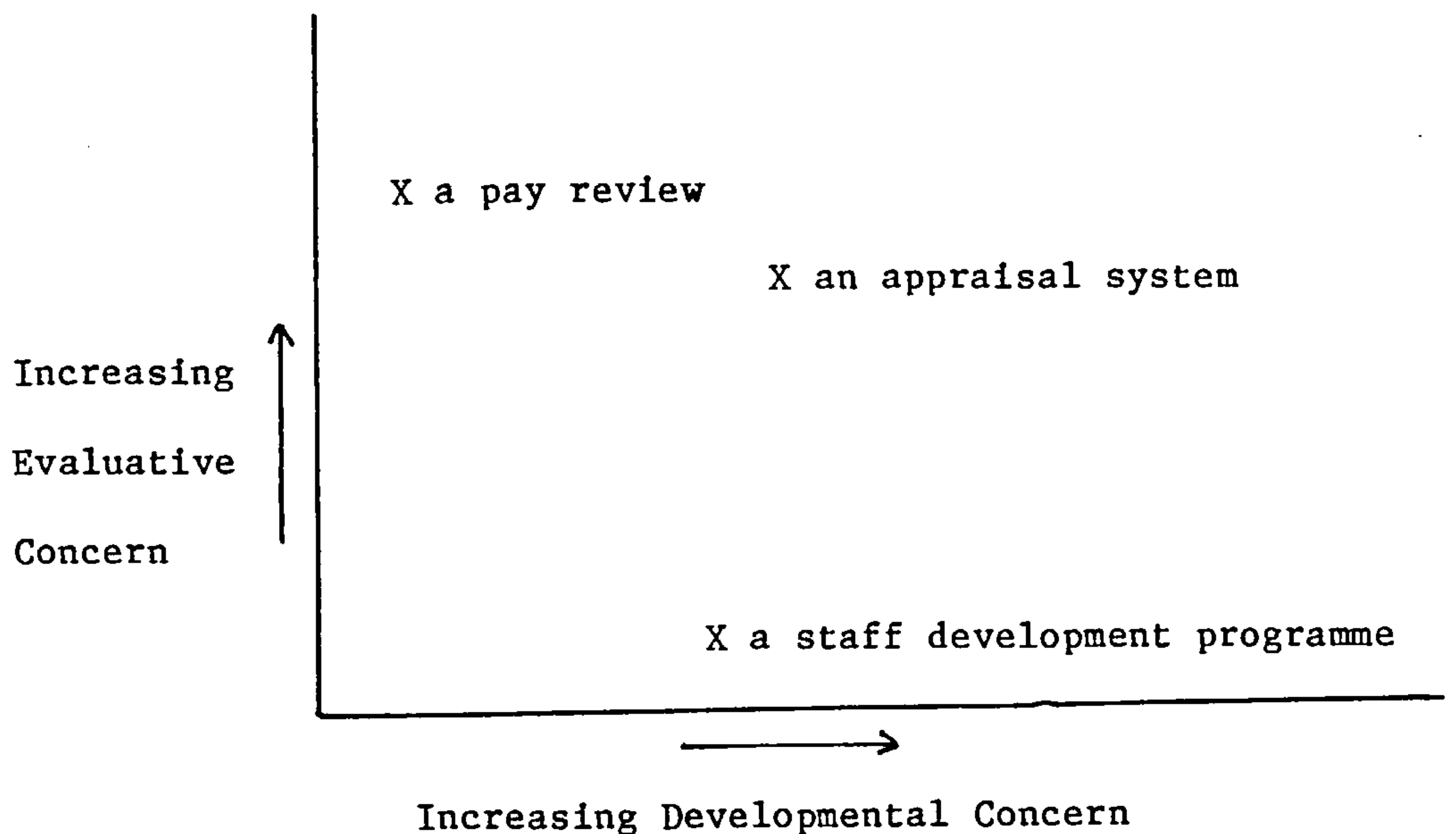
Secondary Heads Association (1984)

The Working Group understands appraisal not as a series of perfunctory events, but as a continuous and systematic process intended to help individual teachers with their professional development and career planning, and to help ensure that the in-service training and deployment of teachers matches the complementary needs of individual teachers and the schools.

DES (1989)

Each of these definitions reveals a different slant in purpose. Is appraisal about checking people, assessing promotional prospects, helping staff to work better, or indeed all of these?

Fidler and Cooper (1988), see staff appraisal as relating to the two processes of staff development and institutional evaluation. They argue that it is concerned with both individual development and accountability. These ideas can be presented graphically:



(after Fidler and Cooper, 1988)

One could argue that there is a fundamental contradiction inherent in using appraisal for both evaluative and developmental functions. Nevertheless, organisational and individual needs will vary and it is important that reasons and purposes are clearly understood - none more so in the case of education because it deals in relationships, where measurement is especially difficult.

As already stated, staff appraisal is well established outside the education sector and practices there have been influential. Three main types of appraisal can be classified as follows:

#### 1. REWARD REVIEW

Used as a basis for differential pay increases this method is aiming to ascertain merit. The credibility of such schemes depends upon the perceived legitimacy of the criteria used to assess merit and the fairness with which it is carried out. Of importance also is the degree to which cash rewards are perceived to be linked to real differences in individual performance, and the relative amount of the "merit" element in pay.



## 2. PERFORMANCE REVIEW

This type is used to remedy job defects and encourage the adoption of higher standards. It assumes that performance is a function not only of personal ability and motivation, but also of the facilities and constraints afforded by the organisation and its external environment. It can be a positive way of helping staff to increase their effectiveness and contribution and of developing teamwork. The appraiser should have a clear idea of what is required to do the job, an accurate job description, and data to hand that has been systematically assembled and recorded over the whole of the review period.

Since there is joint accountability for performance this fosters a two-way dialogue with a joint problem solving approach. The review concentrates on "performance", which can be modified, and not on "personality". However, this may deflect attention from the personal characteristics which ultimately underpin effectiveness, particularly in teaching.

## 3. POTENTIAL REVIEW

Used to identify "fast-trackers" this method relies upon a great deal of speculation. There are a number of other drawbacks. In a "no-growth" situation expectations can be aroused that are difficult to meet. It suffers from a lack of predictive validity. What are the characteristics of the effective performers in teaching and can these be matched against the characteristics of the job holder being considered for promotion? Present performance is not necessarily an indication of potential.

Two surveys of large companies sponsored by the Institute of Personnel Managers, (Gill 1977), during the 1970s revealed six purposes for appraisal:

- to set performance objectives
- to assess past performance
- to assess training and development needs
- to assess increases and new levels in salary
- to improve current performance
- to assist career planning decisions

A gradual shift was identified from purposes which emphasise the

assessment of past performance (summative appraisal), towards a greater concern for improving current work performance and assessing training needs (formative appraisal).

Porter, Lawler, and Hackman (1975), quote the results of a survey on the reasons given by organisations for implementing an appraisal system. The number of firms assigning importance to each purpose is listed below:

Counselling	300
Promotion	298
Training and development	265
Considering retention/discharge	240
Merit increase	237
Bonus payments	54
Profit sharing payments	14

The top three purposes are to do with developing human resources. In industry appraisal appears to be evolving as a technique for staff development rather than staff control.

The evidence from the pilot studies suggests that PERFORMANCE REVIEW is the type of appraisal that is likely to be the most palatable and effective form for the teaching profession. For example in its guidance to Cumbria's teachers the County Council (1987) states that:

The purpose of individual teacher appraisal is the professional development of the teacher. It must be positive, constructive, supportive, and developmental, to optimise teacher effectiveness and maintain and raise standards.

However, the delay over the implementation of the National Steering Group's recommendations has raised again concerns about purposes. Furthermore, in their capacity as teachers' employers, the role of Governors in the appraisal process is far from clear. If hidden purposes emerge, suspicion and distrust are inevitable. This difficulty about interpreting or deciding upon the purposes of appraisal is of fundamental importance because it typifies the context of uncertainty in which the case-study interviews take place.

Whilst it is an extremely helpful concept, the view of appraisal as a dichotomy between evaluation and control, is influenced by one's position in the organisation. Thus "management" may see, hope, or intend that appraisal is developmental, whereas workers may see, fear, or experience appraisal as controlling. Consultation in the setting up of an appraisal system is vital if differences in perception are to be minimised and if purposes are to be agreed and clarified. A democratic approach has been developed at Queens School, Bushey, Hertfordshire, where the Staff Development Committee developed an appraisal scheme that matches the school's particular needs in a spirit of participative decision-making.

Our Staff Development Committee has, in devising a more sophisticated scheme, come to realise that the corporate life of the school depends on corporate activity and responsibility at, and across, all levels and especially so in the matter of appraisal. The main lesson we have learned is that we are all appraisers and appraisees and a worthwhile scheme should accommodate this dual function.

Bunnell and Stephens (1984)

In summary, the purpose of appraisal matters a great deal. If, as



the Report of the National Steering Group suggests, we want teachers to be the beneficiaries of an appraisal system and not its victims, they should be involved in determining its objectives at the institutional level.

#### BENEFITS AND PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH TEACHER APPRAISAL INTERVIEWS

In commerce the advantages of appraisal are well established and some of these will apply to all organisations. However there are problems of adaptation to education, (Fidler 1988). Additionally, there are some benefits specific to the school situation. The alleged positive aspects of appraisal can be summarised as follows:

1. It creates an opportunity for teachers to sit down, on a one-to-one basis, to discuss and reflect upon the concerns of the individual. In a busy school this may not otherwise happen.
2. The appraisal interview can give a teacher the chance to talk frankly about the constraints that he or she feels are limiting effectiveness. There is a certain therapeutic value in being able to let off steam, even when it is recognised that not a lot can be done in practical terms to solve the problem.
3. The interview provides an opportunity for teachers to share their points of view on topics that they might not otherwise discuss.
4. A successful interview can reinforce a sense of "belonging" within a department, year team, or school.
5. The process provides a means of finding out where a teacher may need "on-the-job" assistance.
6. Appraisal can provide a context for the setting of objectives or negotiating new responsibilities.
7. Appraisal may bring to light hitherto unknown talents and interests.
8. It can assist in the dissemination of good practice and lead to a sharing of ideas.
9. It provides an opportunity for judgements about a teacher's work to be made on the basis of evidence that can be brought

forward by the teacher. Judgements about work will be made informally all the time in any case - appraisal allows these judgements to be better informed and more fairly made.

10. Appraisal provides a means of setting career targets and identifying the extra experience or training required to achieve them.

11. In genuinely two-way interviews, those in management positions can discover quite a lot about their own performance.

The Report of the National Steering Group (DES 1989) identified the following benefits:

- greater confidence and improved morale for individual teachers
- better professional relations and communication within schools
- better planning and delivery of the curriculum
- wider participation in and better targetting of in-service training
- better career planning
- better informed references

If the purpose of appraisal is recognised and supported in principle, and the benefits are apparent to both the organisation and the individual, what are the sources of disquiet? Many of the problems of appraisal arise in the implementation stage. Criticism of process rather than intent is commonly found. Stenning and



Stenning (1984) identified three flaws:

1. Appraisers and their appraisees may lack commitment to the scheme. They begrudge the time involved, lack confidence in their judgement, or feel that it will have no positive benefit.
2. Appraisals may be too subjective and senior staff making the assessments may choose not to record points which reflect badly on themselves.
3. Data may never be put to good use. Staff may go through the motions and when career needs are identified this merely brings frustration to the surface because the real promotion prospects are so limited by factors beyond the individual's control.

More specific problems include:

4. The credibility of an appraisal scheme suffers when issues that had been raised in the interview are brushed aside or not followed up. Appraisal heightens the expectation for action but people can become disillusioned if nothing actually happens afterwards.
5. The planning and execution of an effective appraisal system is extremely time consuming and provides yet another "extra" for already overworked staff. The burden for those conducting interviews and completing the paperwork can be heavy. Of particular significance is the "hidden curriculum" message that if no time is made available the exercise is not regarded as very important.
6. A major problem concerns the quality of the interview experience itself. As already outlined in Chapter One, this research is focussing on this particular aspect.

#### THE STAFF APPRAISAL SCHEME AT THE STUDY SCHOOL

The study school is a suburban 11-18 mixed comprehensive school of 900+ pupils. It was formed in the early 1970s, firstly by the merger of two 11-16 single sex secondary modern schools, and then in 1973 by its change-over to an 11-18 comprehensive school. The catchment area provides a very wide social mix and children come from urban, suburban, and rural areas, many from large private and

council housing estates. In most respects it is regarded by the staff as a fairly typical comprehensive school.

Early in 1979 it was felt that a useful way of updating information on all teaching staff would be to ask for a revised curriculum vitae with additional information about in-service training, extra-curricular activities etc. In May 1979 a Senior Teacher with specific responsibility as the school's "Professional Tutor" developed the form and it was used initially in appraisal interviews with senior and middle management staff only. Although some were suspicious to start with, other teachers recognised the benefits, and since the summer of 1980 there have been annual appraisal interviews taking place in June/July for each member of the teaching staff.

The scheme is founded on a supportive approach and it aims to encourage teachers to develop their full potential and to work towards a greater degree of common purpose within the school. It is both retrospective (a review of past work) and prospective (a look ahead).

One of the early reservations was the fear that admissions of problems and failure would become part of the teacher's permanent record. However reports are kept on file for a year and are then returned to the appraisee.

Each teacher has two interviews, one with his/her Head of Faculty and one with the Head of Year. Proformas which cover all aspects of the teacher's work are completed prior to the interview. Copies of

these and other administrative arrangements are included as Appendix 1.

The degree of structure in the guidelines has been a matter of debate and over the years there have been modifications. Inevitably there are variations in the way different staff approach the system. After many years, some staff feel that the annual interview discussion and report are becoming stereotyped and there is a tendency to gloss over problems. One idea is that staff should be offered an alternative appraiser and there has been some experimentation with appraisal by subordinates.

The Headteacher reads all the appraisal interview reports, (agreed statement between appraiser and appraisee), and produces: a general report on the year's appraisal process, a list of matters of concern, an individual response to each teacher, and a list of relevant points (usually in-service training requests), for action by the Professional Tutor.

The system has evolved gradually during the last eleven years and there is widespread recognition - both within the school and from external observers - that the scheme is largely successful in achieving its aims.

### Summary

In attempting to provide the setting for this research a great deal of background information has, in the interests of brevity, either been condensed or omitted. However, the salient contextual points



have been covered by referring to developments at national, LEA, and school levels. These can be summarised as follows:

Informal appraisal of teachers is not new, although the importance of the teacher in the learning process was not fully recognised until this century. The accountability movement helped to promote the idea of formal teacher appraisal and the pressure has intensified in recent years. Policy formulation at LEA level had been negligible before 1985 although the reports from the six pilot Authorities represents a major contribution. Traditionally LEAs have been more active in the related areas of curriculum and school self-evaluation. School based activity in teacher appraisal has been burgeoning in the 1980s and there are now quite a few schemes in operation, although the number of schools involved is a very small proportion. There are many common features of existing schemes.

This chapter has also attempted to provide a more precise definition of appraisal in the light of systems in use outside the education service. The interpretation of purposes is vital and it has been argued that misunderstandings can be avoided in an atmosphere of openness and with consultation. The alleged benefits to be gained from teacher appraisal interviews and the main problem areas have also been outlined.

In the melting pot of discussion and with reference to: schemes already well established, the pilot studies, and the Report of the National Steering Group (DES 1989), a pattern or "style" is now emerging. Firstly, teacher appraisal is about staff development.



It is also concerned with reviewing performance and identifying potential in a supportive and constructive atmosphere. Ultimately, of course, it should lead to improvements in the delivery of the curriculum to pupils.

As was pointed out in Chapter One, the appraisal INTERVIEW is the key activity.

The appraisal interview has been the central component of appraisal in the pilot study. Its object has been to review the appraisee's work, identifying successes and areas which could be developed; to identify any training or development needs; and to agree targets for action. An extended interview between the appraisee and appraiser is an essential component of appraisal as described in the ACAS report. We recommend that the Regulations specify clearly that appraisal programmes should in all cases include an interview with the purposes set out above, the substance of which should be recorded in the appraisal statement.

DES (1989)

The study school displays most of the characteristics of the emerging model, although it has a strong SELF-appraisal emphasis. Certainly the interview is the central activity. In a paper presented to a conference of other Headteachers in 1983, the Headteacher of the study school stated:

The fact that two people sit and discuss the work of one of them, with some sort of agenda, is the most beneficial part of the exercise.

Therefore if we want to find out more about appraisal and whether it is working, we need to take a closer look at the "interview".

The next chapter explains the methodology adopted with the aim of taking this "closer look".

## Chapter Three

### METHODOLOGY

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### SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH STRATEGIES

If one accepts the definition from Cuff and Payne (1979) that any work which claims to be scientific requires a commitment to the relationship between ideas and empirical observation, then the main problem which any researcher faces is to convince his professional colleagues that the findings/descriptions/explanations are supported or warranted by his reference to the empirical world. This characterisation of what is involved in doing science allows for a considerable variety of methodological positions.

One particular perspective (positivism) argues that research strategies should be modelled on the procedures used in the natural sciences. As outlined in the work of Popper (1960) the hypothetico-deductive approach requires that scientists, in any discipline, are basically testing hypotheses by empirical test. By arguing that social facts can be seen as societal forces which shape individual behaviour, Durkheim (1964), pioneered positivistic strategies and produced a heritage for structural sociologists with their emphasis on showing how "structural" properties shape the behaviour of individuals. One consequence of this position is that the social world is seen as accessible to understanding and explanation by the use of the objective, detached and rational strategies of the natural sciences.

However, the attempt to produce definitive laws for predicting social behaviour neglects the fact that members of society are

cultural beings who attach meanings to the world. This concern led Weber (1964) to believe that to model sociology on the methodological strategies and ambitions of the natural sciences was a serious mistake. In Weber's term explanations must also be "adequate at the level of meaning", that is, we must be able to comprehend the ways in which our subjects make sense of the world. He attempted to demonstrate how an interpretative understanding of social behaviour could be achieved in a rigorous and consistent manner.

Bruyn (1970) sets up a similar contrast between the "outer perspective" methodology, corresponding to positivism, and the "inner perspective" methodology. According to Bruyn those working within the "inner perspective" observe man concretely and subjectively, as opposed to the abstract and objective approach of the traditional empiricist and theorist. It is analogous to the position taken by Symbolic Interactionists who have criticised structuralists for omitting to study man as an active attacher of meanings to the world. They stress the need to get at people's definitions of the situation as the social facts which really count. Their studies are often small scale with a focus on the details of action in particular contexts. Their question is: "What is going on here?", rather than: "What data are needed to test this hypothesis from that theory?" The methodological prescriptions of Glaser and Strauss (1967), with their thesis as theory as an emerging entity corresponds well with the interactionist view of social life as developing and fluid.

The ethnomethodologist takes a similar view of social reality, and



takes as his task the description of the common-sense practices through which human beings construct their social world. Data is collected "as it happens" and in this way he attempts to capture the "raw materials" of interaction and produce descriptions. The ethnomethodologist makes explicit the use that the researcher is making of his own common-sense resources in observing what he observes and hearing what he hears.

This study of the appraisal interview is based on the belief that it is possible to both document how participants socially construct meanings AND locate these in a wider structural and theoretical context. The analysis draws on the strengths of differing conceptual frameworks and different research techniques are used to illuminate different aspects. This "triangulation of methods" (Denzin, 1978), provides internal cross-checking and adds to the credibility of the study.

The nomothetic and ideographic representations of reality are not mutually exclusive. The ideal of objective knowledge can utilise both qualitative and quantitative data. However, the preferred research techniques of the "inner perspective" are mainly adopted in this research, and in particular the methodology of the case study.

## CASE-STUDY METHODOLOGY

If educational managers wish to improve co-operation and eliminate destructive conflict in their institutions then we need an accurate account of the actions, events, or processes in question. In the context of teacher appraisal interviews I would argue that interactionist perspectives - whose aim is to cover the meanings actors ascribe to practices and events - are the best methods of achieving this.

The justification for case-study and interpretive methodology rests upon a belief that it provides superior knowledge to positivistic methods. Case-study methodology enables us to gain a richer and more authentic knowledge of the nature of interaction in teacher appraisal interviews than any other methodology. The foundation of the case-study approach is that we can only really know or understand why certain things happened the way they did and what they mean, if we take into account the various interpretations and explanations offered by both informants and an "inside" researcher. The "reality" to be investigated can not be treated simply as a variable, or variables, to be measured, but is a complex social reality of life in an institutional setting. The emphasis is firmly on process rather than outcomes. Simons (1981), characterises the style as follows:

Studies . . . will tend to be descriptive/analytic, particular, small scale. They will record events in progress, document observations and draw on the judgements and perspectives of participants in the process - in coming to understand observations and events in a specific context. Close description both of practice and the social context is an important part of the study. Such descriptions provide opportunities for interpretations that elude other models of assessment or evaluation based on assumptions of comparability and elimination of variation.

Walker (1974), maintains that case-study work would start with, and remain close to, the commonsense knowledge of the practitioner.

The development of ethnographic work in sociology and anthropology rests upon a principle of comparative analysis. If studies are not explicitly developed into more general frameworks, then they will be doomed to remain isolated one-off affairs, with no sense of cumulative knowledge or developing theoretical insight. Chapters Four and Nine provide the theoretical substance for this research.

Atkinson and Delamont (1985), have criticised case-study research on a number of grounds. They argue that case-study is difficult to define and whilst appearing to be a "paradigm", has none of the requisites in terms of agreed subject matter, methods, theories or exemplars. The "case" as the unit of analysis can, in practice, mean just about anything and renders it so general and vague as to be of little methodological value. Likewise they argue that the notion of a "bounded system" is unhelpful, since the boundaries of social systems are matters of construction, by actors and analysts.

It is our contention that the case-study research tradition is seriously deficient due to both inadequate methods and a lack



of methodological self-awareness.

However, as I have already argued, the justification for case-study research as an appropriate mode of enquiry in the study of certain social situations is established, and the attributes of this research - present to a greater or lesser degree - are as follows:

1. The focus is on the observed present but the findings are contextualised within a social, cultural and historical framework.
2. The research is conducted within a theoretical framework which allows for further questions to arise during the course of the investigation.
3. The research involves close, detailed, intensive work. The researcher participates in the social situations under study.
4. The major research instrument is the researcher who attempts to obtain a participant's account of the social setting.
5. Semi-structured informal interviews complement the observational account.
6. Other documents and questionnaires give depth and background to the contemporary account.
7. Different methods of investigation and analysis are used to complement qualitative methods, with the result that different methodologies are integrated into the research.
8. The research attempts to disturb the appraisal interviewing process as little as possible.
9. This research disseminates the knowledge which informants have provided without rendering harm to them and takes into account ethical problems that confront the researcher and researched. Feedback is provided to those who have been researched.

#### METHODOLOGICAL DILEMMAS

Research into the behaviour of human beings and in particular into the process of social interaction is faced with a profound dilemma. This is particularly true in experimental social psychology where



the experimenter usually attempts to construct a situation which is in some way simplified. The paradox is that in devising situations where the subjects are controlled and measured we are not investigating reality at all, but produce types of behaviours that would not normally occur. Bannister's (1966) protest against this approach describes the problem:

We construct situations in which they can behave as little like human beings as possible and we do this in order to allow ourselves to make statements about the nature of their humanity.

Webb et al (1973), draw attention to how even a well intentioned respondent/actor can contaminate data. The "guinea pig effect" leads people to create a good impression and the probability of bias is high in any study in which a respondent/actor is aware of his subject status, although the guarantee of anonymity is an attempt to reduce reactive bias. Differential reaction is produced when respondents/actors select from the many "true" selves or "proper" behaviours available and a role-defining decision is forced. Distortion is less likely to occur when respondents/actors are used to being "tested" or "observed" or when the subject matter is not novel. With all the respondent/actor candour possible, and with complete role representativeness, there can still be an important set of reactive distortions - those in which the measurement activity introduces real changes in what is being measured. For example, opinion developments may be initiated by the measurement process when the true answer may have been "don't know".

Interviews and questionnaires intrude as a foreign element into the social setting they would describe, they create as well as measure attitudes, they elicit atypical roles and responses, they are limited to those who are accessible and will

co-operate . . .

Webb et al (1973)

In addition, some error will derive from the researcher. For example, with time and experience the interviewer may be better able to establish rapport, have increasingly strong expectations of what a respondent/actor "means", and code differently with practice. Error relating to recording accuracy are reduced by taping the interview but error relating to the nature of the researcher's interpretation of what transpired remains. Furthermore, work on the earlier analysis of data may influence the analysis of subsequent data.

These difficulties apply acutely to research into the teacher appraisal interview. Gathering data unobtrusively poses immense practical problems and, more importantly, is unethical given the confidential nature of an appraisal interview. The dilemma is not resolved by an experimental approach which asks staff to replicate an appraisal interview and re-create the real life event. The result would be totally artificial and contrived. The most useful avenue is to undertake intensive analysis of sequences of actual interaction.

Nevertheless, the problem of minimising the self-consciousness of the people being studied remains. As already noted, reactive error resulting from evaluation apprehension represents a potentially serious threat to validity. The confidential and intimate nature of an appraisal interview merely exacerbates this problem. Therefore a vital feature of effective observation is to avoid having the researcher's presence intrude on the appraisal interview. With

this quandary in mind it was decided not to "sit-in" on any appraisal interviews. Stewart (1977), recognises the same obstacle:

However, in-house research that involves sitting in on the actual interview may be fraught with danger; it must be very difficult to have an ordinary appraisal interview with one's boss when there is a silent observer in the corner.

In addition, there was the practical difficulty that I would be unlikely to be available when the interviews were scheduled to take place.

Audio-taping the interviews was not only feasible but considerably less obtrusive. Without the use of audio-records the observer's perceptual system gets overloaded and material noted can be a function of the researcher's idiosyncracies. Supplanting the observer with the tape recorder reduces the risk associated with human fallibility as a measuring instrument. The taped record is permanent and can be the basis for new hypothesis testing.

Another use to which hardware has been put is to obtain research entree into situations which are excluded by the usual simple observational method. Some of these content areas have been unattainable because of the privacy of the behaviour . .

Webb et al (1973)

Indeed, subjects are more likely to behave in a natural manner, and, after a while, might even forget that the interview is being recorded.

The major drawback is that non-verbal behaviour can not be observed. This is a severe disadvantage because some of the most important



findings in the field of social interaction are about the ways that verbal interaction needs the support of non-verbal communication. In conversation the visual-gestural channel is used simultaneously with the audio-vocal channel and the meanings communicated in an appraisal interview clearly depend upon a subtle combination of signals in the two channels.

For a group with relatively little overt non-verbal behaviour, a tape-recording probably supplies all that is needed, but it does omit expressions and gestures which may be important in the interpretation of behaviour.

Argyle (1957)

Some important elements of non-verbal behaviour that are not being taken into account therefore include: proximity, posture, facial movements, changes in direction of gaze, eye contact patterns, and bodily contact.

Thus after careful consideration it was felt that although audio-taping restricts the amount of information for analysis, the data is consistent in its context of collection.

As already explained, the interpretation of taped interviews relies heavily on a phenomenological research methodology. In making use of the case-study approach the emphasis is on the analysis of a small selection of interviews in the specific context of the study school appraisal system. Without reference to the context of situation the interpretation of talk is inadequate. Meaning is derived from a background of persons, actions and events or a situation. In the appraisal interview the situation extends from the interpersonal setting of the encounter, to the appraisal system,



to the school ethos. The contextual influence declines in the same direction. One problem of sociolinguistic research results from the research itself. Thus, when one is trying to clarify the significance of behaviour in a situation - a new situation is created. Furthermore the inferential process of sociolinguistic research serves to progressively constrain the data obtained.

Although case-study research allows time to collect detailed information on a few instances, the interpretation of events is subjective and any conclusions may lack the validity on which to build generalities. However, as argued in the following section, the utilisation of actor validation and semi-structured interviews serves to offset this methodological difficulty. Furthermore, as a former member of the study school staff I have a valuable insight into the system, although this knowledge can be counter-productive. One may not have a completely open mind when one knows the actors. The research may be an opportunity to confirm one's prejudices with subconscious selection of evidence. In analysis that makes use of an anecdotal style, it is important for the researcher to be aware that illustrations and detail may take over, so that the study may become a catalogue of minor and possibly trivial events.

#### RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The analysis of a pilot appraisal interview proved extremely useful. The data was gathered over a three year period which not only spread the workload but facilitated longitudinal study.

The selection of pairs was a critical issue. Within the tradition

of qualitative research, sampling on a flexible, theoretically directed basis has been proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). There was little point in taking a random sample since there was no guarantee that every pair selected in this way would be prepared to co-operate. Initially, people were approached who it was felt would be willing to participate. It could be suggested that the ones who agree are likely to be confident people, and would probably perform well in the appraisal interview. This biasing effect could result in a restricted sample in terms of performance and style.

Other selection criteria included the need to use some actors twice - as appraisees in both the 'academic' and 'pastoral' interview; in successive years; and in the roles of appraiser and appraisee. Additionally, it was recognised as desirable that the staff selected should cover a wide range in terms of age, experience and status. In each summer term something like one hundred appraisal interviews take place in the study school. On the one hand it was desirable to involve as many of the fifty staff as possible, and yet it was necessary to utilise only those "volunteers" who I believed to be genuinely unconcerned about the infringement of confidentiality, in order that the data collected be as "normal" as possible. This research analyses the taped record of eleven appraisal interviews.

It was necessary to make use of a "reserve" pair. One interview (number 5), went so badly that the appraiser would not allow me to listen to the tape. Aspects of his behaviour were exposed during the interview that he did not wish anyone else to know about, and yet before the interview took place he was willing to participate. However, "Interview Analysis Forms" (figure 3.3) were completed and

both participants provided some written comments about why the interview was a failure. By using this evidence alone, it would be relevant to the study to try and elucidate what happened in this interview.

## Data Analysis

The analysis of case-study data is essentially concerned with the process of interpretation - that is the translation of raw data into a coherent portrayal of institutional processes. The field of reality with which a case-study is concerned is subject to a series of interpretational and selective stages before it emerges in the form of a thesis. The first involves the identification and selection of what is to count as data - a necessary filtering of the reality with which the observer is confronted. Without it the sheer weight and complexity of the data would be overwhelming. The focus of the research provides a rational and consistent basis for the selection of data. This research has three identifiable stages:

### 1. Knowledge Seeking

On playing through the tape recording of each interview general observations are noted down. First impressions, often a great number, provide the raw material for more rigorous selection.

### 2. Selection

The objective is to focus in on key areas with more directed and repeated listening of tapes. The process of detailed note-taking assists the search for evidence and examples.



Interpretive research builds its data on and around the particular instance by a process of constant comparison, or analytic induction, or progressive focusing.

Adelman and Young (1985)

### 3. Categories and Principles

The emergence of categories assists in the analysis of data.

Tentative and qualified generalities underlying interaction are also developed. These may be of different types. For example, the appraisal interviews in the study school may inform us about appraisal interviews in other schools; or appraisal interviews in the study school may tell us something about interviewer/interviewee relationships in other contexts; or generalities may be confined to the bounded system. These issues are dealt with in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

### Content and Process

In looking at an appraisal interview, a fundamental distinction can be made between content issues and process issues. Content refers to "what" the pair are saying in terms of its purpose and objectives. Process refers to the "way" in which the dyad engage in conversation. The presentation of the analysis of each interview in Chapter Five has four sections:

1. Introduction
2. Content Analysis
3. Process Analysis
4. General Conclusions



## Introduction

This brief section provides relevant background information about the participants and explains the meaning of any aspects of school life, referred to in the interview, that may be unfamiliar to the reader.

## Content Analysis

A detailed descriptive account of the items discussed is given. Obviously, this represents a selective distillation of the interview, but this is a necessary synopsis when one recognises that one interview lasted for ninety minutes. Transcripts of each interview were not made for two reasons. Firstly, the transcript made for the pilot interview revealed that more effective analysis took place by repeated "listening" rather than repeated "reading". Secondly, it was found that transcripts are too bulky to use efficiently - one interview alone amounted to 14,000 words.

Two categorisation systems have been employed to assist in the analysis of content. Firstly, topics have been classified according to whether the discussion is at one of three primary LEVELS:

1. INDIVIDUAL - those items which have a direct bearing on one of the participants alone, usually the appraisee.
2. DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR - topics concerned with the working of the "team(s)" of which the appraisee or appraiser is a member.
3. WHOLE SCHOOL - matters of wider significance, usually concerned with the institution as a whole.

Secondly, and more usefully, content items were classified into

broad substantive groups, and the time devoted to each group was calculated. The major problem was devising a category system which would cater for all of the topics discussed - too many categories would be difficult to handle and of less analytical value. It was decided to wait until all the initial content analysis had been done and thus allow the major distinctive categories to emerge by a careful process of reviewing and sorting. The fifteen content/time categories are defined as follows:

- A. JOB SATISFACTION - often occurring directly from what was written on the proforma and including items where an expression of satisfaction or description of success is paramount.
- B. JOB DISSATISFACTION - the converse of the above.
- C. PRAISE - statements of recognition, approval or flattery.
- D. TEACHING - any discussion of teaching activity relating directly to one of the participants.
- E. PLANS/TARGETS - for the year ahead. Anything which the appraisee hopes to achieve in the future in relation to his/her work. This category would not include career or in-service training plans.
- F. INSET - discussion of in-service training.
- G. CAREER DEVELOPMENT - discussion of career plans or professional growth.
- H. OTHER STAFF - discussion centred on another member of staff or group of staff.
- I. MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATION - topics concerned with those tasks usually associated with the management or administrative functions of a teacher.
- J. CURRICULUM - this category includes discussion of syllabuses, subjects, curriculum development, learning theory etc. It also includes teaching or classroom strategies where the situation being described is hypothetical or detached from the personal teaching style of one of the participants.
- K. RESOURCES - for example, rooms, equipment, materials, finance.
- L. WHOLE SCHOOL ISSUES - discussion of whole school matters, rather than departmental or personal issues, for example, school policies.

M. INDIVIDUAL PUPILS - usually named in the interview.

N. CLASSES - teaching groups, tutor groups, or other specifically identified groups of children, for example, "my top geography set".

O. OTHER - anything that can not be classified into the categories above, including for example, highly personal remarks about home life, and periods of silence that extend for more than 30 seconds.

Clearly, some content items can be classified into more than one category. For example, someone who is describing how his teaching technique resulted in a particularly successful lesson could be classified as either JOB SATISFACTION or TEACHING. In such cases it is necessary to make a judgement about where the emphasis lies. In the vast majority of cases however, categorisation is a straightforward matter.

The content section also includes a critical assessment of the appropriateness of content. The difficulty is to decide upon what criteria the relevance of a particular topic is evaluated. The proforma, (Appendix 1), represents a "content framework" but the only other guidance for participants is that the discussion should include both "a review of past performance" and "a look ahead to the next year".

### Process Analysis

For the purpose of this analysis the unit of verbal behaviour is the "utterance", which may consist of a "sentence" or its equivalent in talk, since the grammatical structure of spoken language tends to be unlike that of most writing. Communication through talk provides many encoding difficulties. "It's cold in this room" has a literal



meaning but the intended message could be:

"Shut the door behind you."

"I know you have turned down the heat, but please turn it up again."

"This flat is drafty and damp."

Searle (1979), has identified five possible sorts of meaning that people intend to convey by their language:

1. To say how something is.
2. To get someone to do something.
3. To express feelings and attitudes.
4. To make a commitment.
5. To accomplish something directly.

The listener's job is to decide which of these intentions motivated the speaker's utterance. Thus the speech act, like any other action, is subject to interpretation. As a concomitant to the spoken, meaningful communication can also be made through vocal sounds and modifications that are not considered language.

The meaningful analysis of verbal behaviour necessitates breaking it down into segments. As with content analysis, the problem is to devise a schedule of categories of interaction small enough to enable utterances to be pigeon-holed easily, and large enough to cover significant differences. They must also be relatively simple, mutually exclusive units of behaviour, capable of identification with high reliability. The interaction categories do not classify "what" is said, that is the content of the message, but rather "how"



the person communicates. They are concerned with the manner or mode of interpersonal communication and they abstract from its specific content. Most importantly, the categories are an aid to making discoveries about the importance of certain behaviours.

A language of manner, or form of interaction, in fact exists along with the more explicit language, and is regularly employed in interpersonal communication . . .

Bales (1970)

However, it can be argued that category systems do not satisfactorily represent sequences of conversation where interaction is characterised by disturbance, or where messages are ambiguous.

A number of category systems have been devised although the seminal work in this field has been done by Bales (1950), (figure 3.1). His scheme is probably the most widely used guide for the structured, empirical observation of small group member behaviour. The observer employing the category system is assumed to have access to the culture base of the group, so that the meaning of utterances can be interpreted accurately. The observer makes observations as if he were a member of the group and keeps in mind the general question: "If the actor were acting toward me in this way, what would his act mean to me?"

I experimented with both the Bales system and a classification scheme devised by Honey (1976), (figure 3.2). The use of a scoring pad assists in this work but efficient classification requires much patience. With time one's skill improves and the Bales system proved to be easier to use, not least because Bales offers useful instructions on "how" to score. These are summarised as Appendix

Figure 3.1 CATEGORIES FOR INTERACTION PROCESS ANALYSIS

(after Bales)

SOCIAL- EMOTIONAL AREA	Positive Actions	1 SEEMS FRIENDLY
		2 SHOWS TENSION RELEASE
		3 AGREES
TASK  AREA	Attempted Answers	4 GIVES SUGGESTION
		5 GIVES OPINION
		6 GIVES INFORMATION
	Questions	7 ASKS FOR INFORMATION
		8 ASKS FOR OPINION
		9 ASKS FOR SUGGESTION
SOCIAL- EMOTIONAL AREA	Negative Actions	10 DISAGREES
		11 SHOWS TENSION
		12 SEEMS UNFRIENDLY

Figure 3.2 BEHAVIOUR CATEGORIES

(after Honey)

1. Seeking Proposals/Suggestions
2. Proposing
3. Suggesting
4. Building
5. Disagreeing
6. Supporting/Backing
7. Difficulty Stating
8. Seeking Clarification
9. Other

2.

. . . those learning to score interaction should study the definitions carefully, but in fact, much of the operation of scoring is intuitive and very close to common-sense.

Bales (1970)

The Bales scheme has an interesting symmetry. The twelve categories suggest the back and forth character of action and reaction that we all know in normal conversation and social behaviour. They may be grouped into four subsets. Categories 7, 8, and 9, asking for information, opinion, and suggestion respectively, may be called "questions"; whereas the corresponding set, 6, 5, and 4, may be called "attempted answers". This group of six are concerned with the "task". Categories 1, 2, and 3 are labelled "positive actions" and the corresponding set "negative actions". This group of six are concerned with "emotional" responses and describe aspects of 'relational' behaviour between participants. Thus we have the concept of a discussion where two forces are at work: a force directed towards the performance of a task and a force directed towards the maintenance of some kind of emotional equilibrium.

It should be pointed out that many of the smallest utterances, which sound like "mhm-hmm" or "uh-huh", are very difficult to classify without the accompanying non-verbal message, and may have been omitted from the analysis. The summary frequencies for each person for each category are displayed in graphical form for each interview in Chapter Five. Also calculated is the amount of time spent talking by each person and his/her average (mean) utterance length.

The utility of the category system is both in the scores it yields

to analyse quantitatively and also in the perspective it provides for interpreting the behaviour of the participants. Interaction process analysis is an aid to non-participant observation of verbal behaviour but the interpretation of profiles is still subjective.

### General Conclusions

This section summarises the key points of the analysis of content and process for each interview. It highlights the salient findings.

### Actor Validation

In illuminative evaluation the actors themselves can be a useful source of additional information. The "Interview Analysis Form" (figure 3.3) is a simple instrument for comparing the interviewer's self-image with the image he presents to the interviewee. Without conferring, and immediately after the interview, both parties were asked to complete a copy of the questionnaire, thus giving an opinion on the behaviour of the appraiser. Obviously the effectiveness of an appraisal interview will depend upon both participants but the responsibility lies primarily with the appraiser. (The commonly accepted definition of an interview is that it is a conversation with a purpose and 'directed'.) The form is an instrument for comparison, not measurement, and thus it is not possible to "add up" scores. However, similarities and differences, both between appraiser and appraisee, and between participants and researcher, can provide points for speculative explanation.



Figure 3.3 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM

Appraiser Name:

Appraisee Name:

1. BOTH PARTICIPANTS - How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Appraiser's mark X

Appraisee's mark 0

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. APPRAISERS - Please describe YOURSELF during the appraisal on the matrix below. Mark X

APPRAISEES - Please describe the APPRAISER on the matrix below. Mark 0

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. APPRAISERS ONLY - How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview? Mark X

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

4. APPRAISERS ONLY - How nearly did you achieve your objective? Mark X

Completely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. BOTH PARTICIPANTS - Overleaf please list future ACTIONS agreed by: a) APPRAISER b) APPRAISEE

In order to minimise discrepancies between actors' accounts and researcher interpretation of the interview, participants were invited to comment on the initial written-up analysis of the interview. Interpretive research regards actors' viewpoints as extremely valuable and these have been incorporated into the analyses in Chapter Five. Some sort of correspondence between the actors' and analyst's view of the appraisal interview helps to establish validity. The researcher can test his analysis by presenting it as being a recognisable account of the event, for their assent or denial. It should be noted however, that in order to maintain an existing professional relationship, some participants were not offered this opportunity. It was not easy to make the analysis sensible to the participants and acquire their commitment to a critical stance. Bloor (1978), faced similar problems in a study of medical specialists. However, respondent validation, despite its problems, is a potentially valuable method for ascertaining the relationships, if any, between the researcher's portrayal and the actors' experience.

Respondent validation of interpretive analysis is a major weapon in the ideological battle with "positivism".

Ball (1983)

### Semi-Structured Interviews

The previous sections outline how this investigation uses "observation" - that is the analysis of twelve appraisal interviews - as the main research method. As has already been stated, this process itself affects the setting and imposes itself on what the ethnographer observes and reports. Indeed, it may be impossible to

take adequate precautions against researcher interference. Apart from actor validation the assigned meanings may be difficult to check. As a former member of staff of the study school I am able to benefit from access to situations as an "insider". Thus there are elements of "participant observation" in so far as I have insights into the context in which appraisal interviews are taking place - although this extends much less to the actual appraisal interviews themselves.

Therefore, this research is supplemented by a series of interviews with nine members of staff who had not participated as "actors". These respondents were selected on the basis of their knowledge and experience of the study school appraisal scheme and included the Headteacher. Their combined experience amounted to 137 interviews in the role of appraiser and 65 in the role of appraisee. The use of the "interview" research method has certain advantages.

It helps to provide a balanced and more representative view of appraisal interviews and thus avoid allegations of impressionism and subjectivism when using observation alone. It allows information to be collected about events outside the immediate context of the appraisal interview, which, nonetheless, have a direct bearing on it. Having been audio-taped the interviews are available for re-examination and more careful analysis. Interviews are easy to schedule and can be pre-arranged to meet the mutual needs of researcher and respondent.

Unstructured interviews allow respondents to give their version of experiences, and reflect upon events that might otherwise be



obscured. Structured interviews allow the researcher to focus on specific areas and categories and avoid irrelevant material. The analysis of the twelve appraisal interviews in Chapter Five highlighted a large number of issues for further exploration and validation. It was felt that shrewd interviewing with a degree of structure can appear to be fairly unstructured yet still manage to cover the desired points of enquiry. Appendix 3 comprises a copy of the interview questions which provided the necessary structure for this stage of the research.

There are, of course, methodological problems associated with the use of interviews. The major difficulty is that the respondent account may not be authentic. For various reasons the respondent may employ a number of avoidance strategies: For example, he may deliberately try to mystify, or refer to a more authoritative source, or adopt the role of interviewer. Furthermore, teachers are generally in a good position to execute "fob-off" strategies - they have good verbal skills and tend to be "research-wise" - and may side-step or misrepresent issues. Teachers can be "research weary", particularly in an innovative school like the study school, or they may be reluctant to express views which are felt to be out of line with school policy. The experience of being interviewed, justifying opinions, and having one's answers taped "on record", can be daunting and lead to defensive or cautious answers.

Respondents are far from passive suppliers of data - the information they give is negotiated between researcher and respondent - and reflects the extent of rapport and trust between the two. The researcher as "insider" has clear advantages here. The quality of



the response depends not only on the circumstances in which it was given, but also on the respondent's "ability" to give a full and honest version. Checks need to be incorporated into the research strategy before credence can be given to the data. These include the fact that respondent accounts are not used as the sole basis of the research. Additionally, the researcher edits and selects by taking into account the plausibility of the account, the reliability of the informant, and a process of cross-checking between accounts. Once again, "insider" knowledge is helpful.

Most importantly, the respondent accounts can be set alongside observer analysis and actor feedback. The data from the semi-structured interviews is fed into the analysis in Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight.

#### Summary

In the opening section I argued that certain theoretical assumptions about the nature of the social world led to certain "inner perspective" data gathering techniques being adopted as especially appropriate to this research. Interactionist criticisms of structuralist research strategies regard the wholesale acceptance of a positivist position as achieving only a pseudo-scientific respectability because it neglects the distinctively symbolic and interpretive nature of social process.

As well as arguing the rationale for case-study methodology, this chapter has examined the difficulties of research in social psychology, and the particular methodological problems faced in the

context of research into the teacher appraisal interview. The fundamental methodological problem for the researcher is one of ensuring that what is used as data matches to a large extent the reality of the situation under scrutiny.

The research strategies employed triangulation and include: non-participant observation, questionnaires, actor validation, "insider" knowledge, and semi-structured interviews. The research relies heavily, but not exclusively, upon qualitative data and is primarily descriptive, interpretive, and evaluative in nature.

The research procedure has been described in detail, and in particular with sections which: emphasise the distinction between content and process; show the derivation of the content category systems employed; explain the use of the Bales "Interaction Process Analysis" scheme; outline actor/respondent validation techniques; and argue the rationale behind the use of semi-structured interviews.

The following quotation from Cohen and Manion (1980), is a particularly pertinent abstract of the research activity:

The interpretive researcher, however, will start with the social world as it is and, almost in the spirit of an eavesdropper, will tune in, on its terms . . .

The theoretical framework for this research is provided by the next chapter.

## Chapter Four

### THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES FOR THE STUDY OF DYADS

INTRODUCTION

A dyad is essentially a two person group. Whilst there is no ambiguity about the meaning of "two person", there is no generally accepted definition of the concept of "group". It may be more useful to explore the characteristics of two person groups, rather than offer a single definition.

A dyad can be defined in terms of a collective perception by each group member. In other words each participant in the appraisal interview is aware of, and has a view about, his relationship to the other. Secondly, it can be defined in terms of motivation - individuals join a group to satisfy individual needs or to achieve a common goal. Thirdly, a group can be defined as an organised system of individuals with a set of roles and norms. Other structural elements could include power relations or affective relations, for example. It could be argued that the essential quality of a dyad is the interdependency of one individual upon the other, or that the key feature is interaction or interpersonal communication between group members.

Each characteristic points to some important aspect of the concept of "group". According to Shaw (1971), definitions in terms of interdependence or interaction delineate the concept more adequately, since one can assume that if a group exists, the members are motivated to join it and are aware of its existence. Group organisation may be an inevitable consequence of group process.



This attempt at defining a two person group helps us to understand the different theoretical approaches to the study of dyads.

There are a number of reasons why an outline of some of the theoretical perspectives for the study of dyads is desirable. Most importantly, a theoretical framework enables us to view and interpret the empirical data of subsequent chapters. Runkel and McGrath (1972), put it most succinctly:

A theory is a guide to tell you where to look for what you want to observe.

The absence of theory in empirical research makes it difficult to integrate findings within a logically consistent framework. Some social psychologists maintain that the only way we can ever hope to really understand group process is by way of theoretical analysis. The extreme empiricist position holds that any phenomenon can be understood solely through the systematic analysis of empirical observations. The basis of this research is that both these extreme positions are inadequate. Theory provides the organisation of data that is necessary for understanding their implications beyond the specific situations, (appraisal interviews at the study school), in which the data were obtained. Theory may help us anticipate the kind of events we can expect to occur, even if the particular conditions have not yet been encountered.

Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to provide a theoretical framework that draws primarily from the disciplines of psychology, sociology, and social psychology.

The earliest theories were: psychoanalytic (developed by Sigmund Freud and his followers), and behaviourism (Watson, 1914), the former stressing the influence of the psyche and the latter the influence of environmental factors on action (internal and external). The key contribution of Kurt Lewin's (1951) "field theory" was the proposition that human behaviour is a function of both person and the environment:  $B = f(P,E)$ . In 1934 George Herbert Mead laid the groundwork for "symbolic interaction", a theory that gives priority to taking the role of others in social interaction. These references provide the antecedents of a threefold classification of the theoretical perspectives into categories which reflect, and developed from, these different early orientations:

1. ROLE THEORY - attempts to understand group processes with reference to external influences through a particular language, body of knowledge, and rudiments of theory.
2. SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES - are concerned with the influence of "personality" and cognitive structures on social behaviour.
3. INTERACTION THEORIES - suggest that all aspects of group behaviour can be understood by viewing the dyad as a "system" of interacting individuals.

A final section in this chapter will attempt to compare and integrate these theoretical approaches.

## ROLE THEORY

The analysis of social relations in the appraisal interview in terms of role may help to bring some sort of order to the complexity of the event. The meaning of role for the individual has been the focus of attention of the social psychologist. The structural aspects of role have been the concern of the sociologist.

When two people interact, individual differences appear - some talk more, exert more influence, or are more active. Inequalities along a number of dimensions lead to differentiation, which is the basis for group structure. Biddle and Thomas (1966), explain the terminology as follows. The total characterisation of the differentiated parts associated with each individual may be referred to as the person's 'position' in the dyad. The titles of appraiser and appraisee indicate as much, and reflect differences in 'status' as well. The set of expected behaviours associated with the position constitutes the 'role' of the occupant. A given position, (e.g. appraiser), is accorded a given status regardless of the person who happens to occupy it, and the occupant is expected to carry out certain actions. However the enactment is a function of both expected action and the personal characteristics of the occupant.

Banton (1965), defines role as a cluster of rights and obligations - an abstraction to which the behaviour of people will conform in varying degrees. Shaw and Costanzo (1970) define role as:

The functions a person performs when occupying a particular position within a particular social context.



Thus role defines the limits of what is appropriate in the particular setting.

Role theory has its origin in the theatrical conception of roles as parts that actors play in a dramatic presentation. It attempts to explain behaviour mainly by reference to roles, role expectations, role skills, and reference groups operating on the participants.

Two roles are said to be 'interlocking' when there is a regular complementary pattern of interaction. The role cannot be performed unless the complementary role is performed too. This concept may be extremely helpful in understanding behaviour in the appraisal interview.

'Role' may be viewed in several ways in addition to the definition used so far, which can be designated the 'expected role'. The 'perceived role' is the set of behaviours that the occupant of a position believes he should enact. This may or may not correspond to the expected role, since the latter depends upon the perceptions of others. The 'enacted role' is the set of behaviours an occupant actually carries out, which again, may be different from the expected role or the perceived role. A similar classification relates behaviour to: the individual's own ideas of what is appropriate (role cognitions); the other person's ideas about what he will do (role expectations); and the other person's ideas about what he should do (role norms). The extent to which there are differences among these different aspects of role, the probability of conflict in the dyad is increased.



Rules of external action that both members of the dyad adhere to during interaction are called 'norms'. Norms provide a basis for predicting the action of the other and thus enable the individual to anticipate the other's actions and prepare an appropriate response. Such rules also serve as a guide for the group member's own actions. Norms are evaluative in nature - they represent value judgements with respect to modes of action in social situations, and act as guides to what should be done in the cultural context. Norms are functionally valuable because they reduce the necessity for the exercise of influence to restore conformity, and thus provide a means of controlling behaviour without entailing the costs. The extent to which a participant will conform to the norms will depend upon such factors as: personality characteristics, the kinds of stimuli evoking the response reflecting conformity, situational factors, and the relationship between the participants.

A role can be thought of as a cluster of norms providing for specialisation of function among the group members. A particular role is occupied when, in relation to some special social or task area, the norms applicable to his behaviour are different from those applicable to his partner.

When the quality of B's outcomes can be affected by variations in the behaviour of A, person A has 'power' over B. In any dyad both members are dependent upon the relationship to some degree, and this means that each has some power over the other. The fact that, in the study school, the appraiser is the line manager of the appraisee, and therefore in authority, does not necessarily mean that he exercises power in the appraisal interview. The evidence

for power stems from any observations that A undergoes little variation in outcomes as a consequence of the actions of B, and that A's actions are largely of internal rather than external probity.

The role relationship is also influenced by the nature of the task. Problems can be created if the task is perceived as ambiguous or difficult. In an appraisal interview the properties of the task create patterns of interdependency, although clearly these patterns are influenced by many other factors. An appraisal interview is very much a human relations, conjunctive, problem; which illustrates the general point that the requirements of the task or situation in which they find themselves exerts considerable influence over role perception and expectations, norms, the interaction process, and the success, or otherwise, of the appraisal episode.

#### Functional Roles of Group Members

Benne and Sheats (1948), analysed the participation of group members in terms of functional roles which resulted in three broad categories:

(a) "Group Task Roles" are related to the task.

(b) "Group Building and Maintenance Roles" relate to the manner in which the group performs its task.

(c) "Individual Roles" relate to the satisfaction of individual needs, which may not necessarily be directed towards the task or the maintenance of group relationships that might facilitate the

accomplishment of the task.

Any group member may perform a variety of roles, including roles in each of the three broad categories.

#### Group Task Roles

(a) The 'INITIATOR-CONTRIBUTOR' suggests new ideas regarding the group goal. It may take the form of a new definition of the problem, or a suggested solution, or a different procedure.

(b) The 'INFORMATION SEEKER' asks for clarification of suggestions made in terms of their factual accuracy, and for facts pertinent to the issue under discussion.

(c) The 'OPINION SEEKER' is interested in values, opinions, and alternative suggestions.

(d) The 'INFORMATION GIVER' offers facts or generalisations, or relates his own experience to the topic being discussed.

(e) The 'OPINION GIVER' gives views and beliefs.

(f) The 'ELABORATOR' spells out suggestions in terms of examples, offers a rationale for suggestions previously made, and tries to deduce how an idea would work out in practice.

(g) The 'COORDINATOR' clarifies the relationships among various suggestions, and tries to pull ideas together.

(h) The 'ORIENTER' defines the position of the group in relation to its goals by summarising what has occurred, or raising questions about the direction the discussion is taking.

(i) The 'EVALUATOR-CRITIC' is concerned with relating the group's accomplishments to some standard. He may question the practicality or logic of a suggestion for example.

(j) The 'ENERGISER' prods the group to action or decision, or attempts to stimulate the group to be more effective or creative.

(k) The 'PROCEDURAL TECHNICIAN' performs routine tasks for the group, e.g. distributing papers, arranging the seating.

(l) The 'RECORDER' makes a record of the decisions or the product of the discussion.



## Group Building and Maintenance Roles

- (a) The 'ENCOURAGER' praises, agrees with, and accepts the contribution of others. His/her attitude indicates warmth and solidarity.
- (b) The 'HARMONISER' mediates over differences, attempting to reconcile disagreements, and relieve tension in conflict situations.
- (c) The 'COMPROMISER' offers compromise by yielding status, admitting error, or by "coming half-way".
- (d) The 'GATE-KEEPER and EXPEDITER' attempts to keep communication channels open by facilitating the participation of others.
- (e) The 'STANDARD-SETTER' expresses standards for the group to aim for in its functioning, or applies standards in evaluating the quality of group process.
- (f) The 'GROUP-OBSERVER and COMMENTATOR' keeps records of various aspects of group process and feeds interpretations into the group's evaluation of its own procedures.
- (g) The 'FOLLOWER' more or less passively accepts the ideas of others.

## Individual Roles

- (a) The 'AGGRESSOR' may deflate the status of others, show disapproval, attack the group or the task, show envy etc.
- (b) The 'BLOCKER' tends to be resistant and negative, opposing without reason.
- (c) The 'RECOGNITION-SEEKER' works to call attention to himself by boasting, reporting personal achievements, struggling to prevent being placed in an "inferior" position etc.
- (d) The 'SELF-CONFESSOR' uses the audience opportunity of the group setting to express personal "feeling" or "insight" etc.
- (e) The 'PLAYBOY' makes a display of his lack of involvement in the group's processes. This may take the form of cynicism, nonchalance, or horseplay.
- (f) The 'DOMINATOR' tries to assert authority or superiority over other group members.
- (g) The 'HELP-SEEKER' attempts to call forth sympathy from other members, through expressions of insecurity, or personal confusion.
- (h) The 'SPECIAL INTEREST PLEADER' speaks for some other interest group, usually cloaking his own prejudice or biases in the stereotype which best fits his/her individual need.



Some of these functional roles may not apply to situations where there are only two members in the group. Nevertheless, it might be interesting to observe the extent to which group members in the appraisal interview characteristically perform certain roles.

The role perspective utilises a language which enables it to articulate complex, real life behaviour as well as, or better than, any other single analogous vocabulary. The unique perspective of its language will provide a means of describing behaviour in the appraisal interview.

## SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

### Personality Traits

The notion that personal psychological development can affect group performance is well established. Golembiewski (1962), suggested that personality characteristics are as important as group properties for understanding group behaviour. Personality traits are clearly related to behaviour because a personality trait is usually defined as a tendency to behave in a particular manner in differing situations. To the extent that the personality characteristic exists, there should be some degree of behaviour consistency which inevitably surfaces in the appraisal interview. In the following discussion the plethora of personality characteristics that have been studied are grouped into five broad categories after Mann (1959).

1. INTERPERSONAL ORIENTATION - Authoritarian persons believe that it is right and proper that there should be status and power differences among persons, and they tend to be demanding and controlling in their relations with others when in positions of power. Similarly they are submissive and compliant in subordinate positions. Equalitarians, on the other hand, reject both the superior and subordinate roles. Authoritarians tend to conform to group norms more closely than the non-authoritarian.

The tendency to "approach" (like, esteem, trust), or to "avoid" (dislike, distrust), others could also be of significance in understanding behaviour in the appraisal interview, since those with approach tendencies tend to be co-operative, trustful, and adaptable, and therefore may enhance social interaction, cohesiveness, and morale in the encounter. Avoidance tendencies suppress friendliness and cohesiveness.

2. SOCIAL SENSITIVITY - refers to the degree to which the individual perceives and responds to the needs and emotions of the other person. This personality attribute may lead to positive effects, especially if possessed by appraisers.

3. ASCENDANT TENDENCIES - Individuals vary markedly in the extent to which they assert themselves and wish to dominate others. Such people attempt leadership, are assertive and creative. They tend to promote group cohesiveness, influence group decisions, and conform to group norms.

4. DEPENDABILITY - relates to personal integrity and behaviour consistency. Self-reliance and responsibility are desirable group qualities since conventional behaviour is unlikely to disrupt the group. Unconventional behaviour creates uncertainty and the lack of behavioural stability might reflect disinterest in the purpose of the appraisal interview.

5. EMOTIONAL STABILITY - This category refers to a class of personality characteristics that are related to the emotional or mental well-being of the individual. It is reflected by such positive characteristics as adjustment and emotional control, and by negative characteristics such as anxiety, defensiveness, and depressive tendencies.

Anxiety undoubtedly influences interpersonal behaviour and rarely contributes to effective group functioning. Anxious individuals have lower aspirations for the group and more variable responses. Personal concerns apparently cause them to be unusually dependent upon the other person, and they are easily satisfied with the outcomes of interaction. Conforming to norms may be one means of reducing anxiety.

The extent to which an individual's personality reflects adequate organisation relative to his environment is referred to as "adjustment". Group effectiveness, cohesiveness, morale,

motivation, and communicative efficiency, are positively related to adjustment measures.

In explaining behaviour in the appraisal interview the influence of personality traits is likely to have a significant part to play.

Shaw (1971) expressed a similar view:

To summarise the findings relative to personality characteristics and group processes, there is good, though limited, evidence that behaviours in groups are caused, in part, by the personality characteristics of the group members.

### Cognitive Theory

Cognitive theory is a phenomenological approach which maintains that we can understand a person's behaviour only if we know how that person perceives the world. Social cognition is a form of cognitive psychology that deals specifically with the ways in which we think about people and the social aspects of our environment. Social cognition theory emphasises the fact that we organise information about interaction in the same ways we organise information in general. We encode, represent, categorise, form schemas, make associations, and retrieve.

Theorists are concerned with types of cognitive structures and the processes by which such structures are formed. The most widely used concept is that of a 'schema', an organised configuration of knowledge derived from past experience that is used to interpret current experience. In other words, a schema both reflects what we have already experienced and influences our perception of new events. The emphasis is on explaining the individual's behaviour by



reference to his cognitive schema.

#### F.I.R.O. A Theory of Interpersonal Relations

Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation is a theory formulated by Schutz (1958). It holds that people orient themselves towards each other in certain characteristic patterns, which are major determinants of interpersonal behaviour. The interaction pattern is developed in a person's childhood and describes how he responds to three interpersonal needs:

1. Inclusion - the need for togetherness - striving for prominence, recognition, or prestige. The person may be overly friendly, amiable or deferent.
2. Control - varies according to the need to dominate people. For example, those with a high need to be controlled are compliant and submissive.
3. Affection - refers to close personal and emotional feelings between two individuals. The person with a strong need for affection will be friendly and try to establish close emotional ties.

When two persons interact, each one typically enacts in each need area the characteristic behaviour pattern that he developed in childhood. The interaction patterns may be either compatible or incompatible. If they are compatible, the interaction is likely to be easy and productive; if incompatible, difficult and unproductive. For example, compatibility exists when the two people interacting are similar with respect to the amount of "inclusion", "control", and "affection" exchange required.

Whilst one can not deny the influence of personality in social situations, the extent to which it affects behaviour in the



appraisal interview is a matter of speculation. If the context of the appraisal interview exerts a very strong situational effect, the range of behaviours is more limited and the impact of personality therefore less pronounced.

The interactionist position, considered in the next section, maintains that, in most instances, we can explain behaviour by considering the interface between 'personalities' and 'situations'.

## INTERACTION THEORIES

### Exchange Theory

This approach to understanding social behaviour relies upon the psychological principles of reinforcement and learning and involves an analysis of the relation between stimuli and responses. If a response leads to a favourable outcome, the person has been rewarded and the probability that the action will be repeated increases. Exchange theory may be particularly relevant to the appraisal interview in that it focuses on the interactions between two people, (Homans, 1961).

In interacting with one another, participants make exchanges to achieve pleasure, (e.g. approval or prestige). A more complex version of social exchange theory is provided by Thibaut and Kelley (1959), who emphasise the dynamic aspects of dyadic interaction - a process in which a person who is acting with and reacting to the other person may be affected by that person's actions.

The consequences of interaction can be distinguished as: (a) rewards received, and, (b) costs incurred. Rewards and costs depend in part upon his own behaviour and in part upon the other's behaviour. Some are external to the relationship (exogeneous), for example, each individual brings his values, skills, and predispositions to the encounter. Others are intrinsic to the interaction itself (endogenous). The reward/cost positions the members of the dyad may achieve will be better:

(a) The more rewarding to the other is the behaviour each can produce.

(b) The lower the cost at which such behaviours can be produced.

In applying these concepts to the analysis of group behaviour Thibaut and Kelley (1959) make use of a behaviour matrix, modelled after game theory formulations. The matrix represents the possible outcomes of interactions of persons A and B. This analysis of dyadic interaction can be used to predict the course of interaction if one can identify the rewards and costs in the situation. In dyadic interaction the behaviour of each person may instigate responses which are incompatible with other ongoing responses. "Response interference" may be expected to increase the costs of performing the behaviour and decrease the reward value of the behaviour. If the relationship is to survive, excessive interference must be avoided through synchronising behaviour to include only compatible responses - that is, those behaviours high in reward value and low in cost.

## Social Comparison Theory

Rooted in the work of Leon Festinger (1954), this theory states that individuals evaluate their opinions and abilities by comparing them with the opinions and abilities of other people, and in order to do this they choose similar people to compare with. Social comparison is an interpersonal process and the self-evaluation that takes place in an appraisal interview will relate most directly, perhaps, to the views expressed by the appraiser.

Furthermore, the context of the appraisal interview with its emphasis on self-appraisal, serves to situationally induce the process of social comparison. Given the generally accepted view that there is no objective, physical measure of teaching performance, the social realities of the appraisal interview are a very powerful arena for establishing one's own evaluations.

Further theoretical developments have identified a drive for self-validation or self-esteem which causes individuals to interpret the information they receive through social comparison in a way which maintains a positive self-evaluation. In other words, people take credit for their own successes, and deny responsibility for their failures. The concepts of social comparison and self-validation may be useful explanatory tools in the analysis of appraisee behaviour in particular.

## Self-Attention Theory

Self-attention theory is concerned with the self-regulation



processes that occur as a result of becoming the figure of one's attentional focus. This could be regarded as the key activity for appraisees. According to self-attention theory there are three fundamental requirements for any self-regulation behaviour to occur:

- a) Self-focussed attention - which can result from the situational induction of the self-appraisal interview to provide the predisposition for self-consciousness.
- b) Some behavioural standards are made salient by the environment. The context of the appraisal interview will evoke certain behavioural standards or norms whilst some will be purely idiosyncratic to the individual.
- c) A good outcome expectancy - which means that one believes that one can successfully reduce the discrepancy between current behaviour and the behaviour standard.

If the behaviour of participants in the appraisal interview can be described as a process of intentional matching of behaviour to some behavioural standard, then self-attention theory will provide a useful analytical framework.

### Self Presentation Theory

What choices are made in an appraisal interview with regard to how each participant represents himself to the other person? Self presentation refers to behaviours that attempt to convey some information about oneself or some image of oneself to other people, and has been dubbed 'impression management'. Different situations arouse different identity concerns and the desired social image in an appraisal interview is therefore context related.

Goffman's (1967) theory of the "Presentation of Self in Everyday



Life" described social interaction as a theatrical performance in which each individual presents a "line" - a set of carefully chosen verbal and non-verbal acts that expresses one's self. Two types of self presentation motivations can be distinguished: One (pleasing to the audience), is to match one's self presentation to the audience's expectations and preferences. The other (self-construction), is to match one's self presentation to one's own ideal self.

For Goffman, one of the fundamental rules of social interaction is mutual commitment, whereby each participant works to keep the other "in face". Maintaining face through a repertoire of face-saving devices is not the goal of social interaction; rather it is the necessary background that permits social interaction to continue. Incidents that threaten the face of a participant also threaten the survival of the relationship, so corrective processes are continually at work. For social interaction to be effective, participants must regulate their self presentation so that it will be perceived and evaluated appropriately by the other.

The choice of self presentation strategies depends upon the individual's goals. Jones and Pittman (1982) have identified five major strategies of self presentation that could be applicable to the appraisal interview:

1. INGRATIATION - by complimenting the other and conforming to the other person's opinions or behaviours. The ingratiating person is often a reactor, responding to comments by the other person, friendly, a good listener, and willing to look for common ground in a conversation.

2. INTIMIDATION - to arouse fear and control in the interaction. Perhaps this is not likely in an appraisal interview because participation is essentially voluntary.

3. SELF-PROMOTION - where the goal is to be seen as competent. The person tends to be proactive, take the lead, and focus on strengths. Weaknesses are acknowledged when they are already known, or in order to be more credible when skills are claimed.

4. EXEMPLIFICATION - tactics which are designed to elicit perceptions of integrity and moral worthiness and are aimed at gaining respect.

5. SUPPLICATION - advertises weaknesses and dependence, perhaps to seek sympathy.

The main contribution of self presentation theory to understanding group processes is to pose the question: How is the behaviour of each participant determined by his concern with how he is perceived by the other? One could postulate that the appraisal interview situation gives rise to both the "audience pleasing" and the "self-construction" motivations for self presentation - although the balance between these motives will be influenced by several variables, not least the status, power, and dependency of each participant.

Implicit in the theories considered so far is the idea that social behaviour begins with the self concept - the totality of an individual's thoughts about the self. In a teacher's professional life, the appraisal interview could be a powerful mechanism for affecting that person's self-concept, particularly that aspect of self James (1890) called the "social self". (He classifies the self into two other categories: the "material self" and "spiritual self"). The social self is crucial to everyone's self-concept because it comprises the recognition one earns from others that arise out of transactions. We learn about ourselves from the reflected appraisals of others and through the outcomes of actions we take. Cooley's two line stanza written in 1922 expresses the

essential social nature of self-concept:

Each to each a looking glass  
Reflects the other that doth pass

Thus the evaluations of others can have a profound impact on us:

I am not what I think I am.  
I am not what you think I am.  
I am what I think you think I am.

Bleiburg and Leubling (1971)

#### Communication and Social Interaction

Thus a more complete view of human communication is one that recognises that it is 'transactional' - not just an 'action' or an 'interaction'. The 'action' view of communication regards a speaker as simply putting ideas into words and sending them to a hearer (the 'conduit metaphor' perspective). It tends to ignore the listener's role in the process, especially through response or feedback. The view that communication is an 'action' is drastically oversimplified. It ignores the effects of the context and it assumes that the message the communicator sends is exactly the message the listener receives. The need to identify the connotative meanings of talk in its context was stressed by Adelman and Walker (1975) in a criticism of the Flanders (1970) system.

The 'interactional' view acknowledges that communication is always affected by the responses that one gets from the other person. Thus it is more accurate to view communication as a process of mutual or reciprocal influence. The 'interactional' view emphasises that communication involves not just action but action and reaction, not



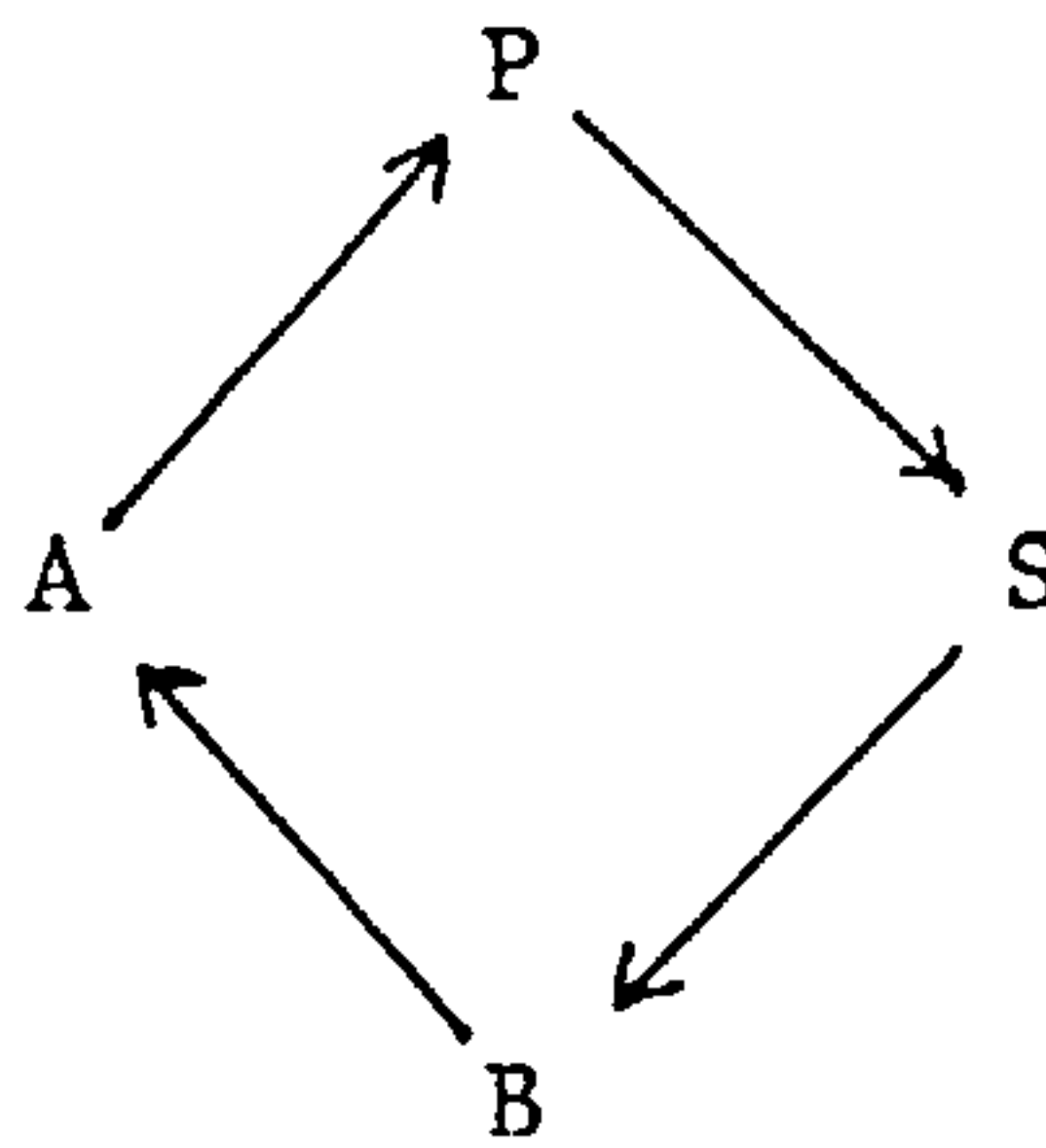
just stimulus but stimulus and response. However there is still difficulty in identifying which actions are stimuli and which are responses.

The 'transactional' view argues that human communication is the kind of event which shapes the self-concept. This process of self-definition and response to the definition of the other is going on whenever people communicate. Dyadic interaction is an interdependent process of selves-negotiation. Much of this negotiation takes place through the use of metamessages.

Metamessages are communication about communication. They provide a context or frame for messages and thus affect how the communication event is understood. All communication includes metamessages about the relationship perceived between the two participants.

In interaction the self-concepts of both participants are modified and grow out of the communicative exchanges. Thus the process of communication itself has a vital part to play in interaction because it links the self with the other person. The process of interpersonal communication is best seen as a shared social system with both parties bringing a set of expectations and understandings that shape the nature of the communication. Verbal and non-verbal communication are part of the same system.

The cyclic nature of the transaction between the self-concept and dyadic exchange has been diagrammatically presented by Kinch (1972):



P = perception of other's responses towards him

S = self-concept

B = his behaviour

A = actual responses of other towards him

This is the process of interplay as sketched from the viewpoint of one participant. A similar description could be given for the second person. Thus each self-concept influences, and is influenced by, the communicative transaction.

Verbal patterns of communication are regulated by conventions and conversational rules. In its simplest form a conversation between two people has an opening, the body of the conversation and a closing section. Paralinguistic cues play an important part in the management of conversation. Turn-taking, for example, depends more on vocal cues than on the actual content of the conversation. Grice (1975) maintains that people adhere to the "co-operative principle" whereby each participant in a conversation assumes the other to be informative, truthful, relevant, and concise. The implications of what we hear derive from our beliefs about ourselves, the other person, and people's behaviour in general.

## COMPARISON AND INTEGRATION

Each of the theoretical orientations and specific theories discussed makes certain assumptions about human behaviour, defining some variables as important, others as incidental. Comparison across three dimensions reveal their distinctive characteristics.

### Central Concepts

For role theory this is obviously the concept of role, modified as people interact with one another in a social system. Personality factors have been at the heart of the social psychological tradition and for cognitive theory the basic units are cognitive structures and processes. The interactionist perspective explains social behaviour by looking at: specific stimulus - response - reinforcement connections; the concept of the social self; and communication as a transactional process.

### Internal versus External Events

Role theory tends to stress external roles and situations whilst personality and cognitive theories are internal in their focus. Classical reinforcement theory is concerned only with external events whilst contemporary versions give more attention to internal thoughts, expectancies, and mediating cognitions.

### Individual versus Social Structure

The psychologist's traditional interest in studying individuals and



the emphasis on the individual in cognitive theories gives a clear emphasis. Individual differences in interaction goals provides a similar orientation from the interactionist perspective. Role theory, in contrast, virtually ignores individual differences; it looks instead at the common features of roles as the determinants of behaviour.

To summarise, the three orientations differ considerably in how they think social behaviour develops. None may be sufficient in itself to explain behaviour in the appraisal interview - but each perspective can offer valuable insights. One might conclude, therefore, that the behaviour of participants in an appraisal interview can only be fully understood by taking account of all perspectives. For example, Ridgeway (1983) stated that group effectiveness:

. . . emerges from the interaction of skills and personalities of the members, the nature of the task, the group's structure and norms, and the influence of the outside environment.

Any attempt to incorporate aspects of different theoretical orientations into one approach could be extremely beneficial to the researcher wishing to integrate empirical findings in a coherent and economical form.

One early effort - Group Syntality Theory - was formulated by Cattell (1948), and is a theory comprising two interrelated parts - one dealing with dimensions of the group, and the other with the dynamics of syntality.

The dimensions of the group consist of three categories or "panels",

labelled "population traits", "syntality traits", and "characteristics of internal structure". Population traits are the characteristics of the individual members of the group which exist independently and are brought to the group. This panel includes things like: intelligence, attitude, and personality. Syntality is defined as the personality of the group, or more precisely, as any effect that the group has as a totality. These are the behaviours that make the group a unique entity. Internal structure refers to the relationships among group members and structural characteristics such as roles and status positions. The group dimensions are analagous to the key concepts of role theory and personality theories.

Cattell's major concept for analysing the dynamics of syntality is "synergy". Each person joins the group for the purpose of satisfying some need and thus brings a degree of energy that he has committed to the activity (e.g. appraisal interview). Synergy is the total of this energy available to the group. Typically, the activities of the group are of two kinds: activities directed towards the maintenance of the group and those directed towards the achievement of goals. Thus some synergy must be devoted to establishing cohesion and harmony, ("maintenance synergy"), otherwise the group would disintegrate. The remainder, ("effective synergy"), can be used to fulfil the group's objectives. It is clear from this analysis that dyads characterised by much interpersonal conflict are likely to be ineffective in achieving the goals of the group. Thus the theory has some interesting implications for group process.

A somewhat different integrative approach was proposed by Steiner (1972), whose Theory of Group Productivity maintains that group effectiveness depends upon three classes of variables:

1. "TASK DEMANDS" are all the requirements imposed on the group by the task itself or by the conditions under which the task must be performed.
2. "RESOURCES" include all the task-relevant abilities, knowledge, skills or other resources possessed by the group members. If the group has the necessary resources it has the potential to do the job.
3. "PROCESS VARIABLES" include the actions taken by the group in attempting to perform the task. It includes all interpersonal actions, some of which may be nonproductive.

Steiner's suggestion that group process can never enhance group productivity seems dubious given the view that the behaviour of one member may serve as a stimulus to another. If this kind of catalytic action occurs, the group's potential productivity may exceed the potential indicated by the individual performances of the group members.

However, the theory of group productivity is restricted in that it does not purport to account for all group behaviour, only for the productivity of groups. Nevertheless, the concept of performance helps to draw attention to the very important notion that outcome is a function of both:

1. Group inputs, both individually and collectively.
2. The process of interaction.

"Individual" level inputs might include: group member skills,



status, personality.

"Group" level inputs would include group norms and structural features.

"Environment" level inputs refer to task characteristics, any reward structure, and the level of environmental stress.

In conclusion it must be pointed out that it is premature to engage in too much theorising before the empirical data has been collected. What is needed now is a description of what goes on in the appraisal interview. This is the purpose of Chapters Five to Eight. Theory will be re-visited in Chapter Nine, when an attempt will be made to relate the research findings more specifically to the ideas outlined in this chapter.

## Chapter Five

### INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

## INTERVIEW 1

The appraisee (B1), is a Main Professional Grade (MPG) plus allowance "C" (formerly scale 3) teacher, a tutor to a third year group, and he is being appraised by his Head of Year (A1). The interview is therefore concerned with B1's pastoral work. As well as normal registration duties, tutors engage in pastoral work formally during the registration period (20 minutes) on one morning per week, and during a timetabled 'tutorial' period (35 minutes per week). The 'Active Tutorial Work' scheme is used a great deal. The interview lasted 21 minutes.

### Content Analysis

The interview began with A1 referring to the proforma and a comment about the effect of current industrial action but he then asks B1 to comment on the year's successes. B1 remarks that 'Active Tutorial Work' has been both enjoyable and worthwhile and that there has been a satisfying response from the pupils. He points out that it is difficult to identify success in pastoral work. A1 concurs and B1 expands on his view that the pupils have found 'Active Tutorial Work' interesting. A1 asks what B1 gained personally and he responds by referring again to the criteria of pupil enjoyment and worthwhileness. A1 asks about B1's problems and the reply includes reference to lack of time and a personal problem with punctuality. B1 tries to justify his sloppiness and A1 actually helps B1 with his excuses.

1.1.1 B1: I suppose punctuality is not one of my good points. I often get down here late. Whatever time I get in school I



seem to find that I cannot get over here before the second bell.

1.1.2 Al: That is a problem actually isn't it? The actual physical distance between your area and the area over here. I am very conscious of this and it's going to be worse next year because I have got S. with me, yourself, and D. You have all got to get over....

1.1.3 B1: Well I suppose it's not just that. I mean, whatever happens, as a principle I suppose, I don't like to rush - which sounds a bit, er, unprofessional in terms of being here..... on..

1.1.4 Al: (forced laughter)

1.1.5 B1: .. time but, I think it is better, when you get there, to do something worthwhile, than to get there early and frig about... to be quite honest.

1.1.6 Al: I did actually consider, next September, the possibility of having your tutor group over there, but it's not really physically possible from the kids' point of view. They're not sort of able to sit down and relax and do anything. (B1's classroom is a workshop).

1.1.7 B1: No, I'd prefer to have them away from the workshop area I think. It does make a change, although it causes problems with the fact that, for whatever reason, I can't always manage to get there on time. But it's not just this. I sometimes find it difficult to prioritise things really and get to the right place spot on time. Some people manage to do it. I'm aware that it's not one of my strong points.

Al brings up the problem of two pupils transferred to the tutor group. B1 remarks that they have fitted in well. B1 admits frustration with pupils who have repeated difficulties that he can't get to the bottom of, and refers to the problems faced by one girl in particular. The telephone interrupts the interview but the conversation returns to the school and home problems faced by this pupil. A second telephone call disrupts the flow but they return to a discussion of what can be done to help the girl. This leads on to a discussion about whether it is a good idea to talk to the group's new tutor about individuals.

Al asks B1 about plans and targets for the year ahead but B1

reflects on the difficulties of establishing plans and targets in pastoral work. He says that his plans will be similar to this year, that is, to pursue his own "style" of pastoral care which relies on spontaneity. Discussion reverts briefly to the difficulties of measuring success in pastoral work.

When asked whether he requires any help from outside agencies, B1 replies by referring to the supportiveness of the Assistant Head of Year with regard to the enforcement of the school rules regarding make-up. He admits that he wouldn't normally bother with this because he doesn't agree with the rules and doesn't have the time.

A1 asks B1 whether he feels confident about counselling pupils. B1 reflects on the dangers of teachers considering themselves as trained psychologists and feels that he is as well qualified as others to talk with pupils.

When asked whether there are any other comments he would like to make, B1 talked about his tutor style and the importance of having an adult/child rather than a teacher/child relationship with members of his tutor group. He clearly sees the distinction as important.

A1 asks about the tutorial curriculum and the use of the textbook. B1 explains his individualistic approach, which involves referring occasionally to the course guidelines but not the text. He maintains that he uses a flexible and unstructured approach and looks forward to the tutorial lesson. B1 admits to planning the tutorial timetabled period but not the tutor time scheduled for Thursday morning.

Al compliments B1 on his contributions to year team discussions and asks him whether he thinks the lack of meetings has helped or hindered the work with the pupils. B1 replies that he doesn't think the lack of meetings has adversely affected work, and remarks that there can be too many meetings.

B1 explains his "cynical" attitude towards administration work and feels that he can get bogged down by it. He admits to a superficial treatment, resents getting "chased" over it, and says that he does it at the expense of talking to the pupils. Al agrees with B1 that much of this work should be done by administration staff.

B1 expands upon his discipline philosophy, which revolves around taking care of the small points and argues the effectiveness of a "petty sounding" approach. He feels it is a pity that staff don't take the same view. Al remarks that 60 staff will provide as many different ideas on discipline but concurs with B1's strategy. Al asks whether there are any final points and concludes by saying that he looks forward to working with B1 in September.

Most of what is said in interview 1 is relevant to a generally accepted view of the role of a tutor, but it could be suggested that B1 uses the interview as an opportunity to air views and prejudices. For example, his approach to punctuality, the tutorial course guidelines and book, and administrative work is verging on the dismissive. Surprisingly, Al's almost supportive remarks on these issues condones behaviour that he is probably not happy about.



The emphasis in this interview is clearly on self-appraisal but it could be argued that B1 only appears to be self critical. Is the real purpose of his comments to justify the way he operates? For example:

1.2.1 A1: Are there any other points which you want to mention?

1.2.2 B1: General admin. I am a bit cynical about admin. work really. I feel that there is so much admin. that could be done in education, that there ought to be education administrators like there are hospital administrators.

1.2.3 A1: I agree.

1.2.4 B1: I prefer to spend my time teaching but you get bogged down by it. Although the register is a small part of it, but it's not one of my stronger points and often I don't do it by the book as it were. I shall do what I can but I resent getting chased over it, really, - if it's an admin. thing.

1.2.5 A1: Those things could easily be done by office staff if they have got the office staff to do it. Silly thing that we need to do it ourselves.

1.2.6 B1: I usually find time to get it done but often it's at the expense of talking to the kids.

1.2.7 A1: That's right - which is bad.

The content classification for this interview (figure 5.1.1), shows clearly that most topics were at the INDIVIDUAL level with some items falling into the YEAR TEAM category. There were no topics discussed that were school-wide in nature. The discussion of individual pupils does not fall neatly into any category, although in this case the conversation centred on new pupils "fitting in" to the tutor group - a sub-unit of the year team yet obviously the responsibility of the individual tutor. The content/time analysis (figure 5.1.2) shows that discussion of individual pupils was a significant proportion of time.

Figure 5.1.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 1

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

Satisfactions gained from active tutorial work.

Lack of time to deal with pupil welfare issues.

B1's problem with punctuality.

Individual pupils.

B1's targets in pastoral work.

B1's "style" as a tutor.

B1's views on administrative duties.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

The tutorial curriculum.

The supportiveness of the Assistant Head of Year.

The effect of not having had year meetings.

Individual pupils.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

Figure 5.1.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 1

Job Satisfaction	3
Job Dissatisfaction	2
Praise	0
Teaching	5.5
Plans/Targets	1.5
INSET	0
Career Development	0
Other Staff	0.5
Management & Admin.	2.5
Curriculum	0.5
Resources	1
Whole School Issues	0
Individual Pupils	4
Classes	0
Other	0.5
Total	21 minutes



The content and structure of this interview was very largely determined by the proforma (see example in Appendix 1). A1 asked about satisfactions, frustrations, plans and targets, etc. There is nothing wrong in using the proforma in this way but it can have the effect of being restrictive. A1 was not really prepared to digress or probe B1 beyond this. A1 did not stimulate B1 by challenging or by expressing an alternative view - although on occasions I suspect that he would have wished to. Content was relevant but perhaps constrained by A1's fairly stereotyped, mechanistic, and arguably unimaginative interview style.

### Process Analysis

A1 spoke for 26% of the time and B1 for 74%. Figure 5.1.3 shows the distribution of utterances in terms of the Bales categories for A1 and B1. The graph reveals an interview that was extremely amicable - both participants spent a relatively large proportion of the interview agreeing with each other. There are clear differences between A1 and B1 shown by the graph, and these may reflect the nature of the role relationship in an appraisal interview. A1 spends most of his time agreeing, seeming friendly and asking for opinion. B1 talks for three-quarters of the time, mostly in giving opinions and suggestions. Not once during the whole interview do either disagree or show tension.

A1 seems particularly concerned to maintain a cordial atmosphere and demonstrates attentive listening by intermittently saying, "Yeah, yeah". (However most attention signals are non-verbal, for example, sitting alert, looking at the speaker and nodding and smiling.)

Figure 5.1.3 VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 1



Al's acts of tension release are also evident, as illustrated in the example below:

1.3.1 Al: While mentioning problems, you had a transfer of a girl from 3S.

1.3.2 B1: Oh, yeah, yeah.

1.3.3 Al: A.T. and also you had S. in June. Have they sort of fitted in quite well with the kids?

1.3.4 B1: Yeah, actually I don't find them as problems at all.

1.3.5 Al: No, I didn't mean it as a problem - no - but when kids join a tutor group sometimes they feel isolated.

In this example, Al inadvertently describes the girl transferred to the tutor group as a problem, and he is quick to correct himself and follow this up by suggesting that sometimes new pupils feel isolated.

Figure 5.1.4 shows that the perceptions of the participants on the behaviour of Al match up very well, although B1 did not think that Al was particularly flexible. Both found the other person's response satisfying although Al clearly believes that he could have performed better. Both agreed that no future actions were decided upon.

### General Conclusions

On the whole I would suggest that this was a reasonably well conducted, but somewhat routine, interview. Al allowed B1 to air his thoughts by using open-ended questions. He encouraged B1 to talk with supportive comments and B1 reciprocated by talking freely. Al did not allow his own 'hobby-horses' to surface. The interview



Figure 5.1.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A1

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Flexible

Frank ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 ~~X~~ 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 ~~X~~ 5 6 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely 1 2 ~~X~~ 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B1

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

was largely successful because the emphasis was very firmly on self-appraisal. The content was entirely relevant and this interview illustrates well how the proforma helps participants to stay 'on course'.

However, B1 tended to dominate the interview and A1 seemed submissive. This may be a function of personalities or more likely perhaps, a comment on the loose role relationship that exists in the pastoral system of the study school between tutor and Head of Year.

A1's concern to make the interview relaxed and informal was perhaps a little over done - and possibly at the expense of gently probing B1 more deeply. B1 certainly identified areas of weakness - punctuality and a rather relaxed attitude to administrative work for example - but rather than suggest himself, or get B1 to suggest, how performance could be improved in these areas, A1's responses served almost to condone. Perhaps A1 could have been more adventurous and controversial in his use of questions with regard to these topics? On the other hand he would have risked upsetting B1 who may have become resentful and defensive. This is obviously a very difficult area, but on balance it could be argued that since a very good rapport had already been established, and since B1 had identified the problems himself, then it would have been worth A1 prompting B1 to suggest solutions. As it happens, these problem areas will probably persist and A1 has missed his opportunity to try and improve performance.

## INTERVIEW 2

A2 is the Head of the English faculty and B2 is an MPG (formerly scale 1) teacher recently returned into teaching. Previously B2 taught French and is teaching English for the first time. She will be taking up a "B" allowance (scale 2) post next year as the school librarian. The interview lasted for 36 minutes.

### Content Analysis

The interview began with a discussion about '0' level teaching and the collaboration of B2 with a colleague. This developed into a discussion about increasing levels of confidence on B2's part plus a better awareness of problems. There was some reflection on how classroom problems "of the moment" can be resolved. There was a brief look at the use of short stories and their extension to mixed ability groups.

A2 is most complimentary about B2's teaching skills and her ability to develop a rapport with pupils. The lack of recognition for good classroom teachers is highlighted. Individual problem pupils are discussed and remedies suggested, followed by brief reference to 'individual support'. There were two interruptions at the door during this time.

Dissatisfactions discussed centred on the pressure of work, lack of time for outside interests, and a heavy marking and preparation load. A comparison was made with the teaching of French. They concluded that marking was heavier in English due to the diversity



of the pupil response and the demands of 'O' level teaching. Discussion on solutions to this problem focussed on the need to cut down the number of written homework assignments and the need to spend less classroom time actively teaching. The extra burden of report writing was mentioned and led on to expressions of dismay from both that senior management do not appreciate the amount of work done by junior staff; and how they can be convinced of the existence of the problem. The role of the Head of Faculty in communicating views was briefly mentioned. A request from B2 on how she could be helped by A2 to reduce workload led to a review of the benefits of sharing preparation and ideas.

There was discussion on the feeling of isolation prevalent as a result of industrial action. The benefits of talking to other members of staff and the constraints on doing this were explored.

This was followed by an examination of the working relationship between A2 and B2. B2 felt that she had relied too heavily on A2 and needed to branch out. A2 agreed and mentioned that since she represented management, too close a link with her would harm B2's relationships with other staff:

2.1.1. A2: Did also your feeling about opening out and moving into staff - is that stemmed from what you are going to do next year?

2.1.2 B2: Yes, partly. I think also that you and I personally were becoming too closetted together - that I needed to talk to other people apart from you. I mean, you were so supportive to me to begin with and I leant heavily on you when I first came here and there was no resentment or anything from you, which I appreciated. You know, the appreciation I felt was very deep because you did give me a lot of help and support when I needed it.

2.1.3 A2: You need to maintain independence you see. In the

end I represent a hierarchical position, I represent management, and if we are going to work as a team within the faculty you have got to feel separate and not to be constantly identified with me - that's not appropriate. It's not fair on you and it will harm your relationships with other people within the faculty and I think that's very important. I also think you are a very good teacher, you work very well, you have got a super atmosphere, you have got wonderful things going on in there. You don't need me in the same way - you are confident, skilful and competent.

2.1.4 B2: And yet, nevertheless, I am branching out into something new next year that I haven't done before, and I am going to need G. and you and anyone else who can point me in the right dircetion, who can see me getting into the mire - and I am quite happy to be told that.

2.1.5 A2: But that absolutely endorses the fact that you need as much contact as possible.

2.1.6 B2: With other people, yes.

2.1.7 A2: Absolutely, both within and outside the faculty so that you can draw on as many people's interests as possible - and also it means that you don't get bogged down with my prejudices.

Both participants looked forward to the library role next year although B2 expressed one or two concerns. A2 was complimentary about her expectations. There was clarification on the number of 'free' periods B2 had next year for her library duties. A2 agreed to arrange free period protection. There was brief reference to the proposed increase in library capitation.

A2 expressed her satisfaction with the changes that had been made in the faculty and complimented B2 on her contribution. B2 was modest in response and preferred to allocate credit to longer standing staff who must have found it more difficult to change. A2 concluded the interview with further congratulations.

A very wide range of topics was discussed in this interview and these followed freely from one item to another. Figure 5.2.1

illustrates the variety and shows also that most topics occurred at the INDIVIDUAL level. However, there were some extremely important FACULTY matters discussed as well. The proforma was used as a framework but it was not adhered to rigidly. Nearly all content discussed was appropriate and it ranged from INDIVIDUAL PUPILS, (4 minutes in figure 5.2.2), through work with colleagues, to the more personal professional problems of the appraisee. (OTHER = 3 minutes in figure 5.2.2). The interview certainly looked backwards as well as forwards, and there was a great deal of attention paid to how problems could be solved. For example, after a long discussion about pressure of work:

2.2.1 A2: Is there any way in the faculty though, anything that you think I could provide, that we could devise or whatever, that would overcome some of the pressure of the workload? Is there more that we could be doing?

2.2.2 B2: I think we're on the right track when we are forming these six week plans that are in the filing cabinets for all the years. I think that the work that F. and I have done on the 'O' levels, the plans that we have made for essays - if they are pooled and it's done all the time...

2.2.3 A2: We'll find that invaluable.

One or two items of discussion were perhaps of peripheral relevance and possibly reflect A2's intention to have a mutual complaint, for example their discussion concerning lack of recognition from senior staff. On the other hand, one could argue that as a technique for establishing a bond between two people, the identification of a 'common enemy' has obvious advantages.

### Process Analysis

A2 spoke for 40% of the time and B2 for 60%. Figure 5.2.3 shows the



Figure 5.2.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 2

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

Teaching strategies employed with difficult groups.  
Compliments from A2 on B2's teaching.  
Individual pupils presenting difficulty for B2.  
B2's pressure of time, especially heavy marking load and report writing.  
The impact of industrial action on B2 personally.  
B2's feeling about lack of contact with other staff.  
B2's relationship with A2.  
B2's role as librarian next year.  
The need to 'protect' free periods for library related work.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

The benefits of working with a colleague.  
Specific texts used as readers.  
Comparisons between the teaching of French and English.  
Pooling of resources.  
Faculty relationships.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

Lack of recognition for the classroom teacher.  
The need to convince senior staff about workloads.

Figure 5.2.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 2

Job Satisfaction	0
Job Dissatisfaction	5
Praise	7
Teaching	2
Plans/Targets	3.5
INSET	0
Career Development	0
Other Staff	1.5
Management & Admin.	2.5
Curriculum	1.5
Resources	2.5
Whole School Issues	1
Individual Pupils	4
Classes	2.5
Other	3
Total	36 minutes

verbal category profile. A very high proportion of A2's utterances were in the 'positive-emotional' area and she also gave quite a few of her own opinions and suggestions. Naturally, B2 mostly gave opinions but there was also quite a high level of information exchange.

This interview was conducted in a very relaxed manner, displaying an excellent rapport between the two participants and a great deal of humour. The interview was intense, with short utterances, (average utterance length was 8 seconds for A2 and 13 seconds for B2). There was certainly a great deal of active participation from A2. Both were very friendly towards each other and A2 was very attentive, with lots of encouraging "Mmmh". There was much reciprocity - a joke from either would gain a suitable response and there was mutual agreement over many issues. A2 was most complimentary, on one or two occasions to the extent of appearing to embarrass B2: Significantly, figure 5.2.2 shows that 7 minutes (20% of the time) was classified as PRAISE.

2.3.1 A2: I am very, very pleased with what you've done this year and I know you'll be great in the library. I think you've got the temperament and the personality that people will respond very positively to, and more things will develop with the library.

2.3.2 B2: I hope so. I'm looking forward to it, I must admit.

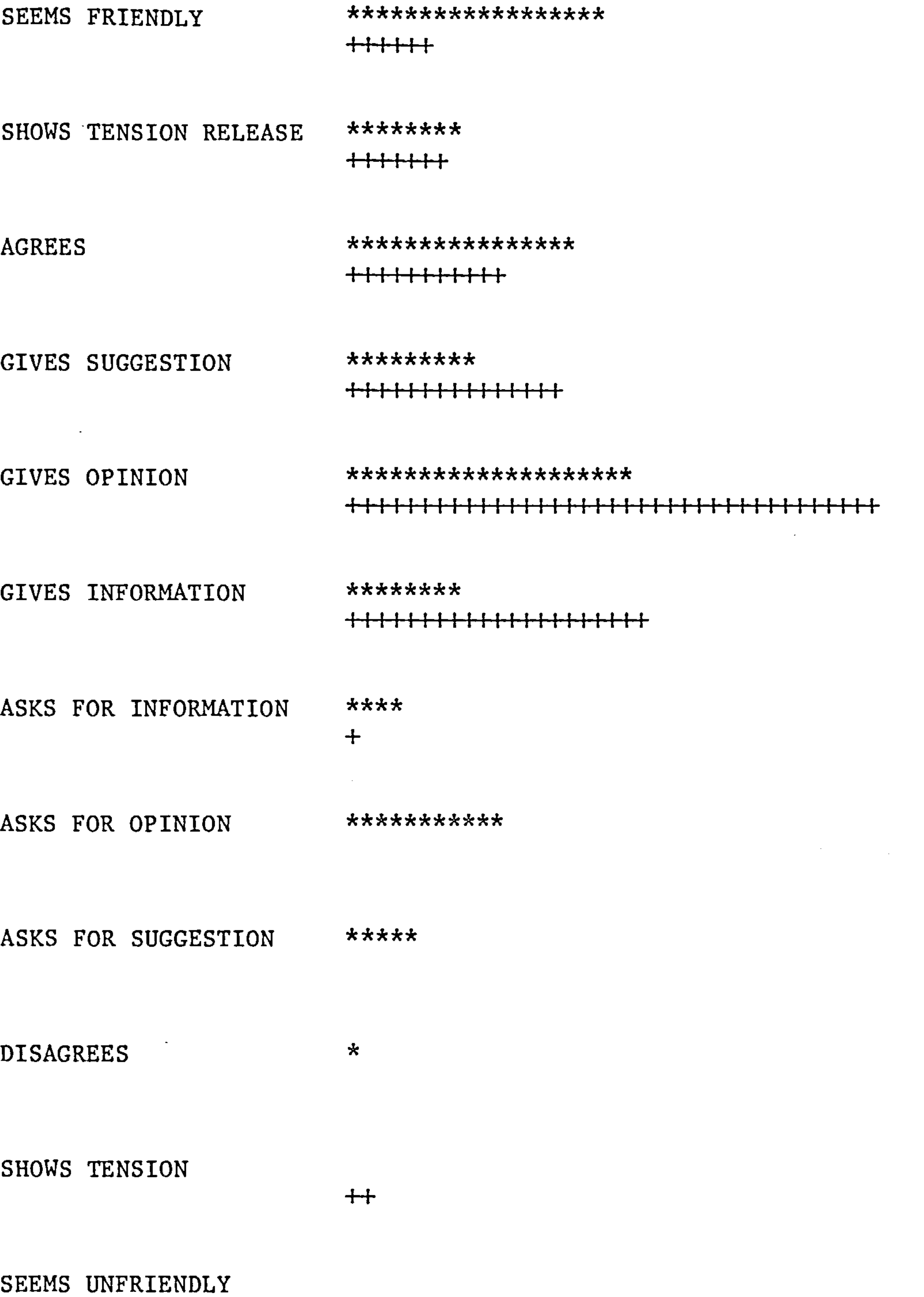
2.3.3 A2: Lovely.

2.3.4 B2: I shall be interested to see what I shall be saying about the library next year.

A2 seemed very involved in the conversation and was particularly adept at getting B2 to develop her thoughts by asking her more searching questions:

Figure 5.2.3

VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 2



0 10 20 30 40

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF UTTERANCES BY A2: \* B2: +



2.4.1 B2: There are one or two in the second year (year 8) that I feel perhaps this year I haven't stretched enough or stimulated enough - like D.G. I know he's had problems at home. Certainly since half term, when I split him up from his buddies, he's been smashing.

2.4.2 A2: He's had a difficult year at school. He's another one I have for French and he's had a difficult time. Do you know what you needed to change to improve that situation?

2.4.3 B2: It helped vastly, actually, when the weaker ones were taken out for 'individual support' - it helped me enormously. It's a very low standard, that group, even though it's mixed ability, and when those six were taken out regularly for the two double periods, it certainly helped me vastly.

A2 was perhaps a little self-indulgent and was clearly looking for some praise from B2. Her remarks on the improvement in faculty relationships were intended to secure compliance - which they did, but not without some tension/embarrassment from B2. A2 also made use of "leading questions" which may be inappropriate for a self-appraisal interview:

2.5.1 A2: Do you feel that the . . . . . action has made you feel isolated?

2.5.2 B2: Yes, I feel that I could come to school, go into the classroom and go away again, almost without speaking to anybody.

2.5.3 A2: And would it matter to anybody that you'd been here?

2.5.4 B2: Not to the powers that be.

2.5.5 A2: What do you feel about that?

2.5.6 B2: I resent it greatly. You know I think it's lack of appreciation.

In this example, whilst appearing to ask quite open questions, the tone used by A2 conveyed the answer she expected, and B2 obliged. A more obvious example of the leading question is illustrated by the following example:

Figure 5.2.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A2

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 ~~X~~ 7 Flexible

Frank ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 ~~X~~ 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) Increased contact with staff.
- b) Resolving time problem with different activities.
- c) Gain appropriate level of capitation.

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B2

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible  
Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) Ensure library allocation money does reach library.
- b) Give guidance and help in library if necessary.
- c) Contact with other members of staff.
- d) Ideas for half termly modules within faculty.
- e) Try not to become overburdened with marking & preparation.

2.6.1 A2: It says something for the faculty relationships. I think they've improved, don't you?

2.6.2 B2: I do actually, yeah.

2.6.3 A2: It's much better and I feel we're working as a team now.

2.6.4 B2: (Hesitantly) Yeah, yeah.

The perceptions of behaviour as recorded by the questionnaires are shown in figure 5.2.4. They display an almost perfect matching. As well as being extremely satisfied with the interview, the behaviour of A2 appears exemplary apart from the observation from both that she spoke slightly too much. The future actions listed not only tie up well with the areas covered in the interview but correspond remarkably well with each other.

#### General Conclusions

This interview was successful for a number of reasons. The relationship between the participants is friendly and open, and the formal interview lapsed into an informal conversation. This undoubtedly aided the two-way flow of opinion. A2 controlled the interview, was extremely receptive, and interested in B2's remarks. Most importantly, she took a great deal of trouble to be complimentary and positive. The interview covered a lot of ground and it is quite apparent that both benefitted from the experience. A2 was a little self-indulgent in her use of leading questions but perhaps she saw the interview as an opportunity to gain feedback on her own performance.



## INTERVIEW 2a

Interview 2a is between the same participants as interview 2 but it takes place at the end of the following year. B2a has been the school librarian for one year but during a period of sustained industrial action. Two innovations referred to later include:

1. A suggestion to the senior management team that information technology be developed in the library.

2. The 'findafact' teaching kit, which is designed to promote cross-curricular library and study skills.

The interview lasted for 59 minutes.

### Content Analysis

The interview begins with B2a admitting that she has had no difficulty with the teaching of English, with the exception of the 3rd year (year 9) set, where there has been a problem getting through to all of the pupils. A2a prompts B2a to expand upon a teaching programme she has recently employed. They talk about pupil choice, collaborative projects, the need for study skills, classroom resources, the usefulness of 'findafact' and its relevance to project work. B2a explains that each pupil/group had to make a presentation and alludes to the difficulty faced by one pupil in doing this. The need for more 'readers' was identified and B2a asked for more help in the future on ideas for appealing to 3rd year (year 9) groups.

B2a expresses considerable concern about GCSE, in particular, the lack of time for preparation, the commitment to meetings, and the



consequence of becoming "overburdened" with work.

B2a admits that she will be reticent to attend meetings after school. They refer to the lack of planning from examination boards and compare the differences in workload between the teaching of 'O' level and GCSE.

Shortage of time is identified by B2a as a problem - especially meeting deadlines, although she admits that this was not the case this year:

2a.1.1 B2a: So, this is why I said that I think this past year ought to reflect more how our future is going to be.

2a.1.2 A2a: Mhm. I feel very strongly that everybody's work has improved. You feel it in the classroom.

2a.1.3 B2a: Yeah.

2a.1.4 A2a: What are the consequences, for you, of not having enough time?

2a.1.5 B2a: The consequences are that I skimp on things, perhaps I don't mark as well as I should, I don't prepare as well as I should, I get irritable, I'm ratty at home, things like that.

2a.1.6 A2a: Have you got somewhere else that you can get time from?

2a.1.7 B2a: Within the school day?

(laughter)

2a.1.8 A2a: No - within 24 hours.

2a.1.9 B2a: Well, I suppose I'd then just have to prioritise and say, "it can wait" and I'd just make myself time.

2a.1.10 A2a: Now where will your priority be?

2a.1.11 B2a: My priority would probably be with work.

2a.1.12 A2a: (with surprise) Would it?

2a.1.13 B2a: Yeah.

2a.1.14 A2a: And so home, and personal life would be less relevant, less significant?

B2a explains that family commitments, to her children for example, would come first but not household chores. She refers again to the benefits this year of having more time to speak to people - (a need she identified in the previous year's interview) - and A2a expands upon the importance of getting communication right in schools. A2a compliments B2a on her confident classroom style and her perception that other members of staff find her approachable.

B2a expresses satisfaction at having overhauled the library - "I know it". A2a identifies the change in atmosphere as B2a's major achievement with the library. In September, B2a wants it to be in full use again and is hoping to secure much greater involvement from 6th formers (years 12/13) performing a librarian's role. They discuss a training programme and the need to make such duties attractive to 6th formers. They decide that classing the time spent there as a 'library duty' rather than a 'study period' should be more effective. A2a suggests a guidance sheet and a training session and points out the difficulty of getting this done in the first week of term.

B2a alludes briefly to the information technology courses she has been on and expresses disappointment with the response from senior staff to her suggestions. A2a concurs wholeheartedly and B2a feels that she will not get very far with her ideas. The library capitation issue is briefly mentioned.

B2a feels that the industrial action has adversely affected the

library and her profile as librarian, and believes that this needs to be enhanced in September. She refers to the booklet for staff on the library in the process of preparation. She describes also the loss of enthusiasm from the existing librarians, mainly because B2a was not there to open the library. A2a suggests a lunch for the librarians the following week.

'Book Week' is discussed and A2a suggests linking it with 'individual support' awareness (see interview 7). A2a suggests swapping classes with other members of staff in order to teach project work skills. They refer to the need for in-service training.

A2a is most complimentary and B2a responds in a similar fashion:

2a.2.1 A2a: You've been a good girl this year, haven't you?

2a.2.2 B2a: Well, I mean, I hope so.

2a.2.3 A2a: I feel very strongly, I love what you do in the classroom.

2a.2.4 B2a: I always get so much support from you. I do, you know. I come over here and whinge, "I can't.. .", and, "I need help...", and there's never any, "Oh, I can't see you now..." - you're always so positive when I come for help.

2a.2.5 A2a: Well it's obvious, isn't it? It's mutual. I mean it's bound to happen. I feel so confident about you in the classroom and I feel you've got stronger, and better and your work is more effective and the kids are so happy with you.

A2a goes on to recount an incident when the pupils were disappointed when B2a was absent one day.

The need to get more money for the library is raised again. A2a suggests a staff party linked to 'Book Week'. B2a is not too



enthusiastic and replies with a comment about being much happier when she is well organised and pays another tribute to A2a. The interview ends with a reciprocal compliment from A2a.

Content classification for this interview raises a difficulty. One major item of discussion naturally concerned the library, but this can be viewed as an individual responsibility held by B2a, a 'unit' or department of the school, or a resource that is essentially school wide in character. Similarly, discussion of 'Book Week' can be located in all three levels, (figure 5.2a.1). It is organised by the English faculty with B2a taking a leading role for the benefit of the whole school. Most other topics of conversation are at the INDIVIDUAL level.

The proforma was used to guide content at the start of the interview but a relatively small number of topics took over, (figure 5.2a.2). Firstly there was a very long discussion about B2a's work with the troublesome 3rd year group - which was perhaps rather extended since there was no reference at all to any other pupil or group that B2a had taught. The justification for this could simply be that B2a had had no problem with any other group:

2a.3.1 B2a: You know, really, no problems. Under the title, 'Problems, dissatisfactions, frustrations' - you'd probably have to prompt me over things because nothing seems particularly obvious as far as difficulties go in the actual English teaching. Possibly that 3rd year set.

2a.3.2 A2a: Yes, that was something I'd picked up.

2a.3.3 B2a: Yeah.

2a.3.4 A2a: Can you identify why?

A2a was concerned to get B2a to evaluate her work with this group



Figure 5.2a.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 2a

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

Library changes.

'Book Week'.

Difficulties with 3rd year group.

Teaching programmes employed.

Problem of preparing for GCSE and extra workload.

B2a's lack of time and its consequences.

Compliments from A2a on classroom work.

The impact of industrial action.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

Library changes.

'Book Week'.

Tributes about A2a and the faculty.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

Library changes.

'Book Week'

Response of staff to 'findafact' and project work.

Involving 6th form.

Senior staff response to information technology.

Figure 5.2a.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 2a

Job Satisfaction	4
Job Dissatisfaction	7.5
Praise	6.5
Teaching	1.5
Plans/Targets	11.5
INSET	1.5
Career Development	0
Other Staff	1.5
Management & Admin.	1
Curriculum	5.5
Resources	3
Whole School Issues	2.5
Individual Pupils	1.5
Classes	4.5
Other	7
Total	59 minutes

with questions like. "How did you know they'd learned from that?"

As might be expected, B2a's role as the school librarian dominated the latter part of the interview and B2a's schemes for the following year are fully discussed. Figure 5.2a.2 shows that the time devoted to PLANS/TARGETS amounted to 11.5 minutes.

The third major content area must be A2a's efforts to provide positive emotional feedback which, as can be seen from an earlier extract, are reciprocated by B2a to at least an equal extent. (The time allocated to PRAISE was 6.5 minutes).

Other problems (DISSATISFACTIONS = 7.5 minutes) brought up by B2a in the interview are largely outside her control, for example, GCSE preparation, lack of library capitation, and the response of senior staff to the information technology proposal.

One could suggest a whole range of items that could have been raised in this interview - other classes, individual pupils, resources, B2a's position in the English faculty, classroom display, seating arrangements etc., but B2a's dual role as teacher of English and librarian was fully covered and provided a kind of content structure for the interview. B2a raised the issues that concerned HER and was given every opportunity to do so by her appraiser:

2a.4.1 A2a: Is there anything else you want to pick up?

However, there was no mention at all of B2a's career development either in the short or long term. This is surprising since the 'acting' Headteacher regarded appraisal interviews as "career



development discussions". The 7 minutes for OTHER on figure 5.2a.2 is due to the many personal comments about home life and such like from B2a.

### Process Analysis

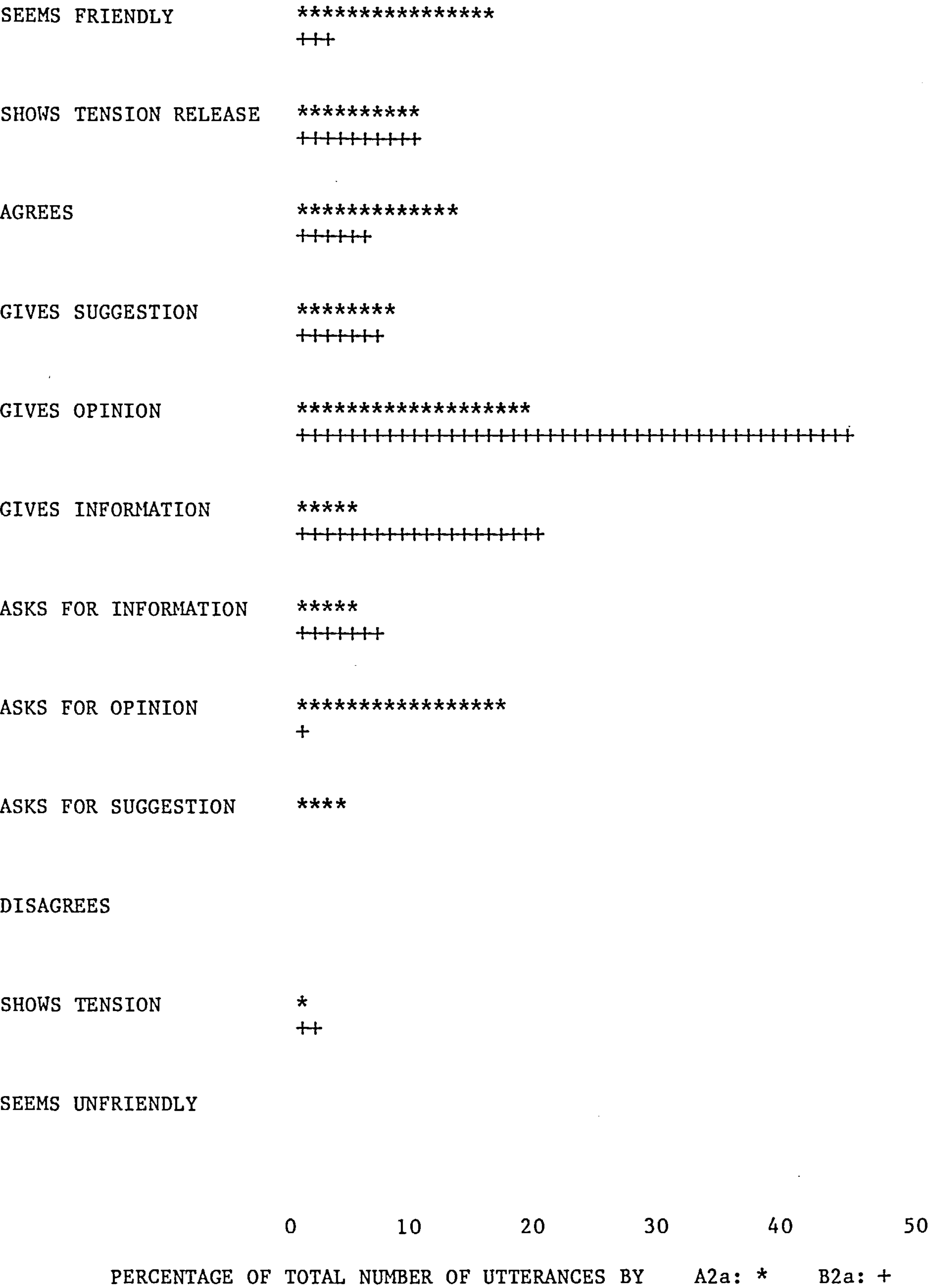
A2a spoke for 32% of the time - slightly less than in interview 2 - and B2a for 68% of the time. Once again the interview was characterised by relatively short mean utterance lengths - 8 seconds for A2a and 15 seconds for B2a. The verbal category profile (figure 5.2a.3) for A2a is similar to interview 2 although rather more time was spent on asking for opinion. 45% of B2a's utterances were giving opinion, and she also gave rather a lot (20%) of information - by describing what had actually happened with the 3rd year group or by seeking clarification on some of A2a's questions. The high proportion of utterances classified as tension release was a result almost entirely of jocular remarks and laughter from both participants. A2a asked a number of probing questions which, on occasions, forced B2a to pause before answering. For example,

2a.5.1 A2a: When you'd finished, did you feel there were any gaps in their learning or in their skills that perhaps they would have needed?... before they started that sort of work.

A2a explored B2a's work with the 3rd year group in detail and gets her to analyse the problem in as much depth as possible. The following quotation not only suggests that A2a was intent on pursuing the issue but also indicates that she exercises a high degree of control over the interview:

2a.6.1 A2a: Can I go back to the point about this choice that

Figure 5.2a.3                      VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 2a



the third years had. Why did you feel it was better? You said it worked better. Why did it work better?

2a.6.2 B2a: They seemed to voice their dissatisfaction very quickly over other things that were offered, over books that were offered. Maybe also having a split class, having to share with another teacher. It's not the most satisfactory thing because you tend not to be able to follow through with things quite as easily. You tend not to be able to have spin-off work from literature quite as easily because you're only seeing them one, or one and a half lessons a week. I think that was the basic difficulty.

2a.6.3 A2a: What about the classroom organisation? - because it seems to me you have to be pretty well organised to be able to do that. Did you have enough resources?

A2a's follow-up question is a very skilful one in that it combines an implied compliment - i.e. that B2a is well organised - with a suggestion that organisation and resources may also be causal factors. Thus A2a is providing an alternative idea in a positive way without alienating B2a.

A2a provided many supportive remarks throughout the interview, raising B2a's status with comments like, "good", "good idea", "very interesting that", and, more significantly, through the 'tone' of her responses. She conveys a real concern for B2a with encouraging verbal responses and I suspect, many non-verbal ones also.

The excellent rapport established is indicated by the fact that B2a is also very open - for example the following request comes quite naturally and without hesitation or embarrassment:

2a.7.1 B2a: Well certainly, I wouldn't mind a bit more help with a class like that in future - ideas on what might appeal. I think J. found the same difficulty. They were a strange group - such a wide range of a) abilities and b) personalities.

2a.7.2 A2a: Yeah - very different temperaments there. More help?



2a.7.3 B2a: Yeah - more help...

2a.7.4 A2a: From?

2a.7.5 B2a: From the faculty, really...

2a.7.6 A2a: Yep.

2a.7.7 B2a: From you and from people who have had that type of group before and what they've done with them and what has been successful and what hasn't. I think 3rd year is a hard year to teach.

2a.7.8 A2a: I do too. I think it's a very hard year. We'll develop something on that because they'll also need some preparation towards GCSE, won't they? And the sort of work that you are doing clearly will help them towards GCSE because it's to do with individual responsibility. Anything else you felt about that group or can we go on to GCSE?

2a.7.9 B2a: Um, yeah, I think we can progress.

Once again, A2a's response shows empathy, tribute, and control.

During the section of the interview concerned with a discussion of the library, A2a recognises a problem with regard to B2a's plan for 6th form involvement as librarians. A2a's adoption of a joint problem solving orientation is illustrated by the following extract:

2a.8.1 A2a: How are you going to put this together in that, this is your free period in which you can study but I also want you to look after the library. Does that not strike you as being rather a lot to ask of somebody?

2a.8.2 B2a: (after a lengthy pause) Judging from what E. (Head of 6th form) has said, they have a lot of free periods so this particular period in the library may not even be classed as a 'study period' - it may be classed as a 'library duty'.

2a.8.3 A2a: Good - that's what I want you to think about because I think that it is asking too much of somebody to say, "This is your study period, but in the middle of studying I want you to get up if somebody comes in..." Are we teaching them to study effectively...

2a.8.4 B2a: If they're being interrupted.



2a.8.5 A2a: Exactly.

2a.8.6 B2a: Yes, point taken.

Thus rather than provide the solution herself, A2a prefers to pose a question which stimulates B2a to think it through and generate the answer. Hence B2a is likely to have a much greater feeling of 'ownership' of this idea. Whilst it might appear to be time-consuming and even rather clumsy, it could be argued that this is a very effective method of raising the appraisee's self-esteem and solving problems.

By contrast, A2a follows up with a piece of advice about producing a sheet of instructions which is more directly given:

2a.9.1 A2a: How are you going to help them know what their role is?

2a.9.2 B2a: By this training programme that I'm going to devise. (laughter)

2a.9.3 A2a: Right (laughter). Would you like to think of devising some sort of sheet for them?

2a.9.4 B2a: Yes, um...

2a.9.5 A2a: Where it's pretty obvious what their responsibilities are and to whom they're answerable.

The laughter from B2a indicated to A2a that she had not given much thought to what the nature of the training programme was going to be. On this occasion A2a did not get B2a to think up the 'instruction sheet' idea herself. Perhaps somewhat impatiently, she preferred to offer a solution herself - which B2a duly accepted. Interestingly, the idea that 6th form library duty periods should be part of their timetable and not a duty done in 'study periods' was adopted. On the other hand, B2a did not produce an instruction

sheet as envisaged by A2a, although she did run an induction session for 6th formers, and there is a general list of librarians' duties posted in the library. Perhaps this indicates the importance of getting appraisees to generate their own solutions.

Whilst in interview 2 the complaint about lack of recognition from senior staff was of a very general nature, and not uncommon from teachers; in this interview there is a much more relevant - and specific - source of disquiet. It concerns the attempt to develop information technology in the library. B2a's expression of dismay is frank enough, but A2a reciprocates with even stronger emotion:

2a.10.1 A2a: I think the immorality, even more, is that a report had been prepared before-hand so they even knew what we were going to be asking for...

2a.10.2 B2a: Yeah.

2a.10.3 A2a: ... and then to come along and say, "Oh yes, we'll do it..", I just feel that was fantastically deceitful.

2a.10.4 B2a: I was a bit cheesed off really with the lack of support from senior management over that.

Appraisers are faced with a dilemma when responding to emotionally loaded comments from appraisees. In this case, A2a conveys a message that says, "I'm on your side over this and you are entitled to express feelings of disgust". The benefits of such an approach are clear: It encourages candour from appraisees and tightens the psychological bond between them. Whilst A2a's response is undoubtedly sincere, it could be argued that the appraiser's responsibility is to be impartial and objective.

B2a is very concerned about the need to improve her image after engaging in industrial action during the previous year. A2a's

emotional concern for B2a is seen in the following example, as she tries to restore B2a's self-perception by both complimenting her and by putting blame elsewhere:

2a.11.1 A2a: Don't underestimate the significance of having created the right atmosphere in the library, and while there may only be a few people who are aware of that, - and most importantly, the kids are aware of it - it is, to a large extent, the insensitivity of others who don't recognise that. I mean the fact that they don't go in the library, senior staff won't know that there is a wonderful atmosphere in there. So don't underestimate the value of that. But in terms of your profile about the library, have you thought about how you're going to enhance that?

The participants have a very strong, mutual, relational/emotional link, both professionally and socially. The pleasant atmosphere that this generates permeates the whole interview to produce a good humoured, relevant conversation between colleagues/friends that is well illustrated by the closing remarks of the interview:

2a.12.1 B2a: Certainly, I'm quite sure I wouldn't be where I am if it wasn't for you.

2a.12.2 A2a: Oh, go on.

2a.12.3 B2a: No, it's quite true. You give me so much back-up. I've so much confidence in you.

2a.12.4 A2a: But you've also got it in yourself, which is ever so much more important.

2a.12.5 B2a: Yeah, that has increased, undoubtedly. But it's still nice when you're around - and things that are new to me - the way things are done and what channels you've got to go through. I find you just so supportive.

2a.12.6 A2a: Good. It is the very way you are as well and because you want to try and you want to learn. You never make it difficult for me. You're great!

That this interview was rewarding and totally satisfactory from both viewpoints is illustrated also by figure 5.2a.4, where a perfect matching is seen on the Interview Analysis Forms. It may have been



Figure 5.2a.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A2a

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Flexible

Frank ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 ~~X~~ 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) Book Week.
- b) Librarian's profile.
- c) Awareness of library.
- d) Cross-curricular development.

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B2a

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:



an oversight that B2a does not list any future actions however.

### General Conclusions

There can be no doubt that the coverage of B2a's work as the school librarian is entirely appropriate. Discussion of her work as a teacher of English was confined to one 3rd year group only.

Nevertheless, there was reference to the previous year and a look ahead - especially in terms of B2a's library plans. Perhaps the only noticeable content omission concerned B2a's career development.

A2a's approbation of B2a was a significant content area in itself and the delivery was almost eulogistic in character. It resulted in reciprocal flattery from B2a. The recognition and warmth shown by A2a towards B2a and the obvious high esteem in which B2a is held, is a major feature of this interview. Yet the event was more than an exercise in "mutual back-patting". There was detailed analysis of the 3rd year group, skilful probing questioning from A2a, frank and honest opinion sharing, and a real attempt by A2a to adopt a joint problem solving approach. A2a allowed B2a to talk freely and openly and yet without losing control. This interview also raises the question of how appraisers should respond to emotionally loaded comments - an issue I shall return to in a later chapter.

### INTERVIEW 3

A3 is the Head of the Sixth Form (years 12/13) and B3 is a sixth form tutor. The interview is therefore primarily concerned with B3's role as a tutor. Every month each sixth form student has a "tick" type report filled in by each of his/her teachers. These reports are passed to tutors for them to discuss with the sixth form pupil - they are called 'Progress Checks'. The interview lasted for 45 minutes.

#### Content Analysis

B3 responds to an introductory question about how things have gone generally, by referring to the effects of the industrial action and how the general malaise and lack of meetings have affected tutor work. B3 expresses a need for some fresh ideas and they discuss the possibility of using more video material in tutor work.

B3 reflects upon the difficulty of getting unmotivated individual pupils involved in tutor work, and he expresses a wish to gain more professional tutor skills. B3 recognises that the need for more training has to be offset against the commitments of a family and of the masters degree course he is about to embark upon. He expresses interest in an understudy role but doesn't want to take on more than he can cope with.

A3 suggests that once the one year sixth formers have left, the end of the summer term provides an ideal opportunity to do prospectus work, and get the pupils to reflect upon the year's work.

A3 refers to B3's comments on the proforma about the 'hidden curriculum'. B3 expands in some detail on this, highlighting the delicate nature of the topics covered. B3 talked about how he deals with complaints from sixth formers.

A3 asks whether B3 had done things in a different way this year. B3 reflects upon the way he has been examining his own work. He has tried some new ideas but not all have gone well. Both agree that on occasions the tutor group needs someone to stick up for them.

A3 asks how B3 thinks the "progress check" system works. B3 explains how the discussion with pupils is valuable but believes teachers should offer written comments as well as ticks.

B3 talked about the perception of some pupils that staff are too personalised, and A3 points out the fine line between an objective remark and the reason, for example, "He's lazy".

There was considerable discussion about B3's promotion prospects and B3 explains that he will not go after just any job. B3 also admits that he may just be making excuses and perhaps he is not pushy enough. A3 raised the question of his own replacement for a period of secondment and the fact that his job was open to only a few selected members of staff:

3.1.1 A3: In fact you didn't have the opportunity, because it wasn't put out to open bids was it?

3.1.2 B3: No, it wasn't put out at all. I mean the opportunity wasn't there.



3.1.3 A3: But I would like to have thought that you would have had a go if it had been, and I get a feeling that you wouldn't have done.

A3 concluded the interview by thanking B3 for the tremendous amount of work he has put in.

The content classification diagram (figure 5.3.1) indicates a good balance between the three categories, although this tends to obscure the fact that this interview was characterised by a very high degree of self-orientation on B3's part.

The discussion covered quite a wide range of ground (figure 5.3.2), but most of it was concerned with reviewing the past year's work. One of the reasons why there was little discussion of the coming year's work (PLANS/TARGETS = 4%) could be that A3 would be away from the school on secondment. B3 was allowed to express his thoughts at length - his mean utterance length was 44.5 seconds, (much higher than other participants), and for A3 it was 10.9 seconds. B3 tended to ramble and re-visit ideas many times - this made it rather difficult to disentangle the main ideas discussed. For example, the following fairly long utterance from B3 is typical of the way he mixes ideas:

3.2.1 B3: I suppose the video thing... it's also another way... again this year I've been a bit concerned about how one or two individuals can, - I won't say spoil the situation - but certainly they don't improve it. And I perhaps feel... sometimes if you were a tutor all the time and you'd had very good professional training, you could probably cope with, say, F.G., her way of saying, "Uggh!" and flopping on the table. What's the best way to handle someone like her as opposed to someone else who will be very fickle? Sometimes, first thing in the morning, the group can be a bit edgy - I can be a bit edgy! I often feel how I would like to see how some other people would handle that - doing a bit more role play perhaps, or even seeing it on video - seeing how a professional would do



Figure 5.3.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 3

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

How to motivate individual pupils.

B3's need for more training in tutor skills.

B3's approach to sixth form matters.

B3's experiences as a tutor.

The possibility of an understudy role for B3.

B3's career interests and his perceived weaknesses in this area.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

The need for video materials in tutor work.

Tutorial work activities.

The effectiveness of the 'Progress Check' system.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

Effects of industrial action

The 'hidden curriculum'.

Figure 5.3.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 3

Job Satisfaction	0
Job Dissatisfaction	0
Praise	1
Teaching	5.5
Plans/Targets	4
INSET	4
Career Development	8.5
Other Staff	0.5
Management & Admin.	4
Curriculum	6.5
Resources	2
Whole School Issues	4.5
Individual Pupils	1
Classes	1
Other	2.5
Total	45 minutes

it. Although I feel I have a natural... I feel tuned into the sixth form... I can do quite well in that sense. I'm now getting to the stage where I do need that little bit extra. It's not just enough to be getting to know the kids through 'A' level sociology, chatting to them about music, or whether it's anything else, or about cricket, or about driving lessons... just having the time or making the time to chat to them for two or three minutes. It does make a difference to them - it does make a difference to the relationships you have with them. But I feel I need a bit more than that now. I need to be able to go in there and be much more professional in the role of a tutor, rather than just an enthusiastic amateur.

A3 is very good at picking up something from B3's speeches. For example, he followed the one above with:

3.3.1 A3: So, it appears this is the right time for some more training?

Alternatively A3 would change direction with a new question.

Despite the labouring of points by B3, the content was appropriate to an appraisal interview because B3 was clearly self-appraising his work in a critical and sometimes very perceptive way. Certainly A3 did not stifle B3's natural flair for introspection, but neither did he allow him to deviate too far. In this interview a relatively high proportion of time (8.5 minutes) was spent discussing CAREER DEVELOPMENT (figure 5.3.2).

#### Process Analysis

A3 spoke for 18% of the time, B3 for 82%. As already indicated, A3 allowed B3 to talk freely and frankly, without interruption. As a significant contextual force, the emphasis on self-appraisal in the school's system suggests that appraisees should be allowed to identify their own problem areas. Since almost all of what B3 said was "in-step" with the objectives of an appraisal interview, is it

possible that he can talk too much? B3's willingness to talk openly at length meant that A3 didn't have to do much prodding or motivating - merely listen and be receptive. The approach of B3 to the appraisal interview made the task of the appraiser relatively easy. Alternatively, this may be testimony to the ability of A3 to develop informal and relaxed relationships with his staff throughout the year. In other words, B3 spoke a great deal because he talks a lot anyway, or, A3 is easy to talk to. In this case it could be argued that both forces are at work.

The profile in figure 5.3.3 shows that A3 is complimentary and supportive, with a high percentage of utterances that are agreeing or seeking opinion. There is no hint of disagreement or unfriendliness. B3's self orientation is reflected by a very high level of opinion giving. His self awareness may serve to restrict B3's awareness of A3, as shown by a complete absence of friendly or opinion seeking utterances. It could be suggested therefore that B3 is not really interacting with A3, although he is performing the self-appraisal role well. Perhaps there is a case here for A3 making his presence felt more forcibly - possibly through gentle, constructive criticism.

A3's questions are open-ended and this inevitably provokes a good response, for example:

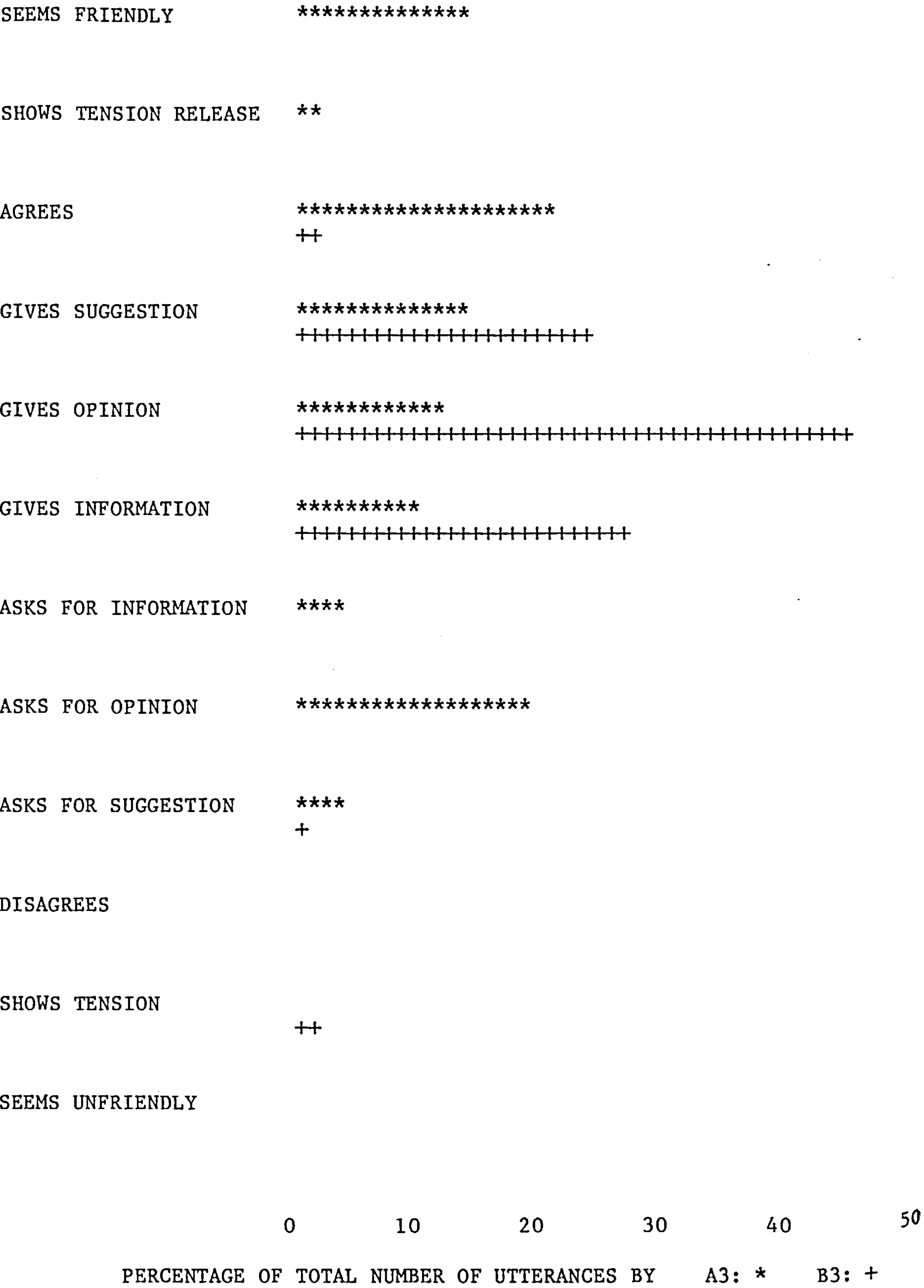
3.4.1 A3: Would you think that this year you've done any things differently than the year before within the tutorial thing - or in your approaches to the sixth form in general?

Some of A3's questions are framed so that they are also suggestions for B3 to respond to. This is a very useful technique for making a



Figure 5.3.3

VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 3



suggestion non-threatening and constructive, and it allows the appraisee to build on his own ideas. For example:

3.5.1 A3: So perhaps more training in the processes rather than in the content?

-----

3.6.1 A3: Although they do need somebody to stick up for them, don't they?

These are, of course, leading questions, but they get B3 to expand upon an already openly stated viewpoint. A3 is attempting to 'build' on an idea rather than introduce a new one. By contrast, it is A3 who starts a conversation about progress checks, and in asking for B3's opinion, he is probably seeking support. The following example combines a question with A3's justification for the system:

3.7.1 A3: How do you feel about the fact that it forces, if you like, a situation where you have got to sit there with an individual and talk about their progress? I mean, do you think that's a useful development?

3.7.2 B3: Yes. Even if it's just quickly collecting them all in, and the fact that they know you are going to come round and have a quick word. Even if you just say, "You're not doing too well here, are you?" That is useful, whereas, if you didn't have that system, it would all just be in the book, wouldn't it?

The Interview Analysis Forms in figure 5.3.4 indicate a satisfactory performance and the perceptions match up well. The list of 'actions agreed' written by B3 suggests that he has benefitted a lot from the interview and intends to follow it up with the things listed.

### General Conclusions

In many respects this could be regarded as a good interview because

Figure 5.3.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A3

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B3

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Flexible

Frank 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 ~~X~~ 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 ~~X~~ 6 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

a) Course to facilitate extra training in Tutorial skills.

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) To organise inter-group activities between tutor groups.
- b) To create tape library for tutor groups.
- c) To implement hidden curriculum more.
- d) To make more use of video camera.
- e) Perhaps in some way seek understudy role.

B3 spent a great deal of time talking about himself and his work - often in a quite penetrating way. Although B3's comments lacked clarity and coherence, A3 was able to pluck out salient points and get B3 to develop these. This is commendable because it would have been very easy for A3 to say nothing. In effect, A3 allowed B3 to dominate the interview - but without losing control. A3's difficulty in this interview was not getting B3 to talk, but in sifting and interpreting the comments he was receiving.

A3, quite rightly, did not intrude upon B3, although he could have made a more useful contribution if B3 had allowed him or prompted him to do so. I am suggesting that B3's high level of self-awareness was counter-productive to the extent that it precluded constructive criticism from A3. One could maintain that there is no place for this in the self-appraisal interview. However, it could also be argued that although a great deal of value was said in this interview, it was not accompanied by the kind of two-way interaction that gives the appraisee an alternative viewpoint and further food for thought.



#### INTERVIEW 4

The appraiser (A4) is the Head of the Social Studies Faculty and the appraisee (B4) is a MPG (formerly scale 1) teacher of sociology. B4 is also the interviewee in interview 3 (B3). The "model office" is staffed by pupils who engage in typing tasks for staff. Integrated studies had replaced separate subject teaching in years one and two (years 7/8), and staff were teaching these courses for the first time. The interview lasted for 90 minutes.

#### Content Analysis

The interview began with a discussion on how the new first and second year courses had gone, and developed into an examination of whether pupils understood the rationale behind the course. B4 felt that greater help for staff was needed in explaining the course rationale to pupils, and added that this problem would have come up earlier if meetings had been taking place. Aims, objectives, and classroom approaches were also discussed.

The teaching styles of other members of the faculty were alluded to, and this developed into an evaluation of the team teaching that took place under the guise of 'individual support'. In particular, the effect that the presence of other members of staff have on the teacher's classroom behaviour, especially in relation to B4 himself, was discussed.

The theme of curriculum development persisted and B4 identified the changes that had taken place in his own teaching, and spoke about

the need for course evaluation and improvement. A4 gave an example of "inventiveness" with regard to lesson ideas, and B4 pinpointed the need to share teaching ideas.

Video material, the access to facilities, and the value of television as a teaching aid were mentioned. The difficulties of resource preparation were talked about, and A4 complimented B4 on the pupil response to his materials. A4 questioned the quality of B4's presentation. B4 agreed that there were failings but referred to other poorly prepared resources, a shortage of time, and awful typing from the model office. A4 suggested that B4 had overestimated the skills of pupils who worked in the model office.

A4 asked for B4's opinion on the new pupil assessments and B4's response was positive and complimentary.

On the proforma B4 had mentioned posters for his classroom. This was picked up by A4 and the discussion developed into the area of the hidden curriculum message of posters and whether it was appropriate to put up posters with a political message.

B4 outlined the content of the masters degree course he is about to embark upon and A4 asked him whether he thought it would open up new career paths. B4 talked at length about the benefits of doing the course, and they discussed whether postgraduate qualifications helped people get promotion. Scale (incentive allowance) posts were referred to, and B4 recounted a recent discussion with the Headteacher on this issue. B4 felt that he would have to look at another school for promotion although he felt suited for incentive

allowance posts involving sixth form work. B4 talked about the suitability of the newly appointed Head of Sixth Form. A4 suggested that B4 should think about preparing himself for a promoted position and B4 expressed a desire for a grooming role. When asked to develop further, B4 identified the waste of talent in schools, the need to learn managerial skills, and not be lumbered with clerical tasks. A4 explained how tasks had been delegated to the Assistant Faculty Head and offered to try and give B4 an insight into his own job.

After some sharing of experiences related to work, the realisation that the interview had extended late into the afternoon prompted closure.

The content classification of this interview (figure 5.4.1) is unusual in that such a large number of items were concerned with issues at the FACULTY level - notably a discussion of the recent curriculum development. Many topics were discussed at both FACULTY and INDIVIDUAL levels, for example, a review of the effectiveness of team teaching within the faculty as a whole included reference also to B4's personal experience in this respect.

In an appraisal interview that lasted for 90 minutes it is possible to cover a lot of ground in some depth. Items were fully dealt with and B4 was capable of expressing his thoughts at length with out interruption from A4, (B4's mean utterance length was 64 seconds). B4's responses were more coherent than in interview 3 and he tended to keep to the point more easily. In this interview there was considerable discussion of abstract issues relating to the



Figure 5.4.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 4

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

B4's confidence as a teacher.  
B4's feelings about being observed.  
Team teaching experiences.  
Classroom resource preparation and presentation.  
The masters degree course B4 is about to embark upon.  
Career planning, career openings, and promotion chances.  
Expertise as a sixth form tutor.  
Possibility of an understudy role.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

The nature and structure of the new first and second year courses.  
How to explain course rationale to pupils.  
Lack of meetings due to industrial action.  
Curriculum evaluation.  
Teaching style comparisons with other staff.  
Effectiveness of team teaching.  
Classroom observation.  
The nature of curriculum change.  
Teaching certain concepts in sociology.  
Quality of newly produced resources.  
The "model office".  
Pupil assessment techniques adopted.  
The impact of posters on classroom walls.  
The teaching of attitudes and values.  
The case for sociology as an incentive allowance post.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

The need for greater access to video recording facilities.  
The suitability of the new Head of Sixth Form.  
The need to utilise talents of staff.



curriculum. For example, figure 5.4.2 shows that 37 minutes was spent discussing CURRICULUM. The following extract is typical of the conversation:

4.1.1 A4: Would you say then, that you still think the course is content oriented?

4.1.2 B4: I don't think the course is content oriented but I think it can unconsciously go that way. With things like faculty meetings and a general closer togetherness of staff chatting about it every now and again - whether it's going out to the pub for a lunch or having an official meeting. I think one needs to do that, otherwise one just sort of shoots up into the faculty room, pulls it out of the drawer and hands it to the kids. I know in some lessons I have just talked too much about content. I think everyone does that from time to time, depending on priorities and pressures. But I wouldn't say the course was content oriented.

4.1.3 A4: No, because the idea is, of course, that although people may rush up to the filing cabinet and whip out a topic, whoever wrote that sheet, or series of tasks - if they did it properly - should have been asking pupils to think, and not merely reproduce information from books. The idea of writing worksheets that are good ones is that they actually get the children to practice the skills, or develop the attitudes, that we identify in our aims and objectives.

4.1.4 B4: Yes.

4.1.5 A4: Do you think that the classroom behaviour of your pupils reflects the aims and objectives? Are these sheets asking pupils to engage in activities that practice the sort of skills that are on our list?

4.1.6 B4: Some are and some aren't. Some are clearly not like that and some do it very well. Some come in between. I think the key actually, lies in how you are teaching it, and the nature of the classroom teacher.

A4 is rather self-indulgent in this respect however because he asks B4 to comment on aspects of work that he has initiated, and he is really searching for feedback. Nevertheless, since B4 has been heavily involved in the new courses, he is able to maintain a self-appraisal emphasis.

A4 does attempt to look for solutions to problems raised by B4. For

Figure 5.4.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 4

Job Satisfaction	2
Job Dissatisfaction	1.5
Praise	1
Teaching	5
Plans/Targets	0
INSET	5
Career Development	14.5
Other Staff	5.5
Management & Admin.	6
Curriculum	37
Resources	11
Whole School Issues	0
Individual Pupils	0
Classes	0
Other	1.5
Total	90 minutes

example:

4.2.1 A4: What about posters in the room?

4.2.2 B4: Yes, I was just opening up my mind on paper.

4.2.3 A4: I was wondering whether we can solve the problem?

4.2.4 B4: Yes, I have something up there on 'sex and gender' - you might have seen it. Basically, I suppose, I would say it's my contribution to the hidden curriculum. I don't actually teach things like sex and gender to first and second years but they are on the walls, and sometimes, if they are waiting for me to come in, or they're at the end of a lesson, some kids might just have a look at a few things like that and some of the posters that D. did. I would like a few more posters on the wall. I'd like posters which have a lot of impact - which actually mean something.

4.2.5 A4: Obviously we can buy posters.

4.2.6 B4: I was wondering whether we could get some. Third World things.

4.2.7 A4: Well these things are available. If you come across something that you want....

4.2.8 B4: Well, I've got a catalogue at home which we could....

4.2.9 A4: There are posters upstairs in the drawer which might....

CAREER DEVELOPMENT (14.5 minutes) was a major content category in this interview. In discussing career aspirations, A4 is keen to offer advice and help. For example:

4.3.1 A4: You've still got to think about preparing yourself for a title in that promoted position.

4.3.2 B4: What? - 'type' of job?

4.3.3 A4: Yes, you've got to think about the structure of schools. One could think about, say, Assistant Head of Year jobs - and there are scale points (incentive allowances) usually for careers work in schools. A co-ordinator for an integrated course might actually be a scale point in some schools. You want to bear in mind a kind of title or position which these scale points would have.

4.3.4 B4: Yes, I had that in mind. I think with the M.Ed. it



might open up a lot more areas for me.

The look back over the previous year mostly dealt with B4's performance with regard to lower school courses, and yet most of his teaching commitment is with the sixth form. Similarly, the look ahead was confined almost entirely to B4's career. There was little reference to how B4 would alter or improve his teaching performance next year. Neither was there any reference to INDIVIDUAL PUPILS or CLASSES (figure 5.4.2). Nevertheless, although perhaps restricted, most of the discussion was relevant with possibly only two diversions. One was about the effectiveness of the model office and the second was about the suitability of the new head of sixth form:

4.4.1 B4: I don't think for instance, that the person who is going to be Head of Sixth Form is suitable for the job at all. He is suitable for filling a gap well, and I think he is probably a good bet in that he's safe, and he'll get through the admin. work - things like that. But I think as an actual sixth form tutor, and being able to relate to sixth form kids, and sixth form problems, and sixth form teaching, then I feel that I have better qualities than that person. I think there are obvious reasons why that person would get the job other than me. But that's an area that I would be very interested in.

It is difficult to see how this relates to B4's work as a teacher of sociology and yet it forms part of a long discussion about B4's career aspirations - a topic that is indisputably appropriate for an appraisal interview. Furthermore, should appraisers allow discussion of other personalities in this way? And yet it is the intimacy and confidentiality of the appraisal interview that encourages such frankness. Clearly, a balance must be found between the raising of legitimate grievances regarding colleagues, and using the opportunity to criticise other members of staff in an unprofessional manner. This issue will be returned to in a later



chapter.

## Process Analysis

A4 spoke for 26% of the time and B4 for 74%. Figure 5.4.3 shows the distribution of utterances amongst the behaviour categories. Giving opinion was by far the most frequent behaviour for both participants. For B4 it represented half of his utterances - a similarly high frequency occurred in interview 3. A4 referred often to his own experiences and used them to elicit more from B4. For example:

4.5.1 A4: What you are saying is that it would be valuable to have an idea of how other people do in fact deal with these kind of situations. It can be done if you work in an environment where you have a very close relationship with classes that are quite close by. I think P. and I would know pretty well how we'd deal with situations of crisis because you can hear what goes on. Now you're pretty isolated, I reckon, I don't think you can hear at all how K. and F. operate.

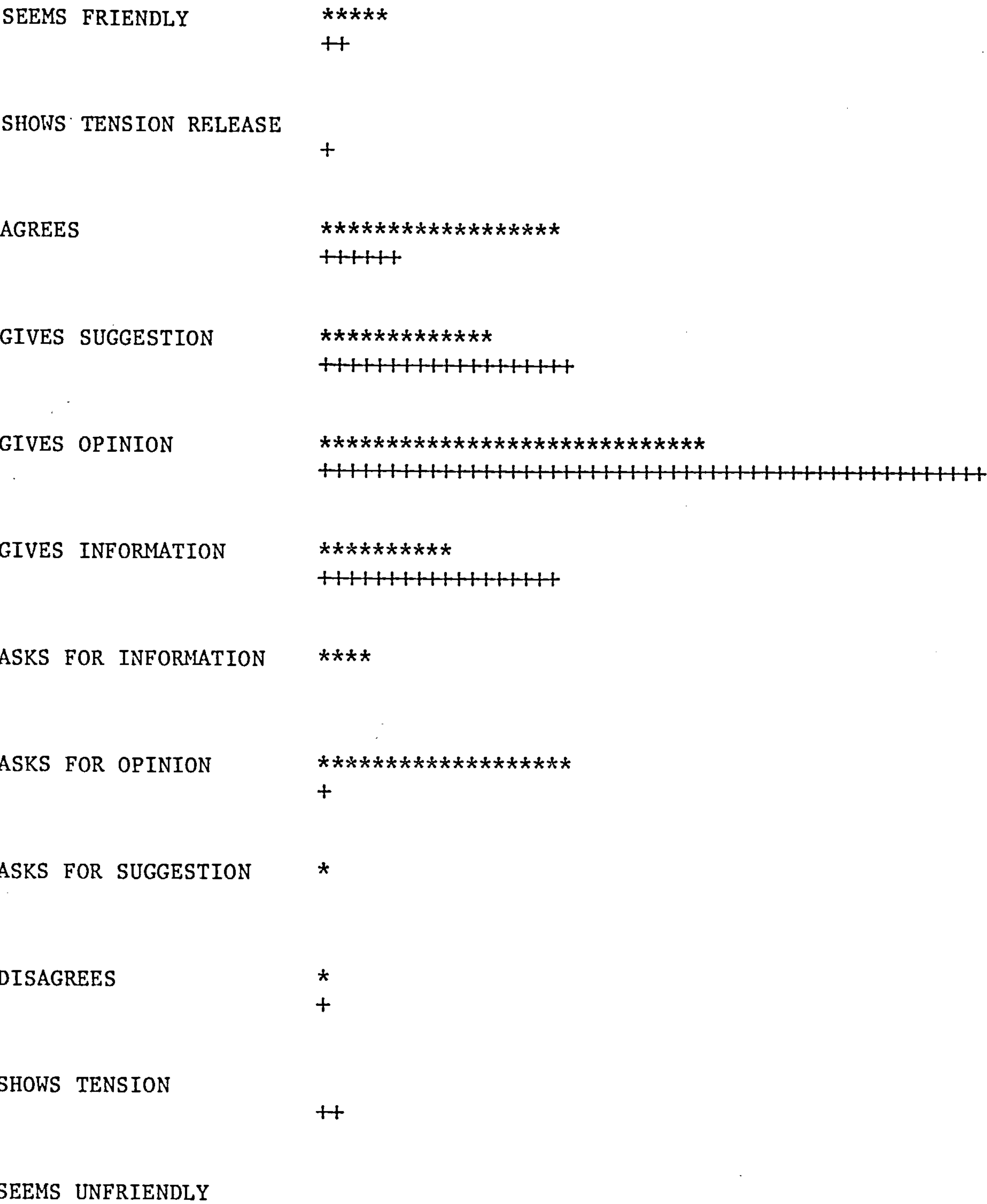
4.5.2 B4: I know how F. operates. I've got a fair idea of how people act in as much that in general conversation we all get intuitions about how certain people would react in certain situations.

This interview was very 'task' oriented, with very few utterances falling in the 'emotional' domain.

A4 was prepared to be critical of B4 in a cautious way. In the following example B4 responds initially with tension and tried to put blame elsewhere (4.6.10):

4.6.1 A4: What do you think about the way that your materials were presented though? Although they were broken up with cartoons and the sort of things we were talking about before, you know, I must say, at times I felt the presentation wasn't very clear.

Figure 5.4.3 VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 4



0 10 20 30 40 50

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF UTTERANCES BY A4: \* B4: +

4.6.2 B4: Instructions to the kids?

4.6.3 A4: Well, no, no, I'm thinking about presentation, crossings out and typing in - minor things, but slightly detracting from the over all impact - making it slightly confusing for the teacher to deal with.

4.6.4 B4: Yes, I, I think basically I would agree with that in some cases - looking back at the sheets.

4.6.5 A4: A bit stuck in, you know...

4.6.6 B4: Yes.

4.6.7 A4: A paste job...

4.6.8 B4: Yes, but then, whilst this doesn't answer the question, there are a lot of other sheets which I picked up which people hadn't even typed and had had them done by hand.

4.6.9 A4: Umm.

4.6.10 B4: I've had the same problems. I've not understood certain things. But initially we all had lots of time to do it and I think the quality of the worksheets were better initially and they've gradually got worse. I was very dissatisfied with the model office and the quality of the stuff which came from there. I ended up typing some of the sheets myself and that would account for some of the poor quality.

This kind of probing is a very delicate matter. Appraisers A1 and A3 steered well away from this but, providing the criticism is valid, specific, and backed up by evidence, it could be argued that it can be a useful way of getting appraisees to be more self-critical.

On the whole the interview was amicable with a high level of agreement. However, on one or two occasions A4 attempted to correct a perceived misconception held by B4. For example:

4.7.1 B4: I know that when we first came here three years ago we were told, "Your ideas are important and you've just come from training. I'm interested in what you've got to say." Basically that just dissolved. No-one's really interested.

4.7.2 A4: But that's not true is it? From my point of view



the fact that you three were new has been one of the most critical things in enabling me to make the changes that we've made.

4.7.3 B4: Yes, but you...

4.7.4 A4: If you three were the three oldest members of staff who had been here for some time, I might be knocking my head against a brick wall.

4.7.5 B4: Yes, your job would have been made a lot more difficult. But I am talking about other members of staff - senior members of staff - who don't really, I think, show that much interest in other members of staff. Perhaps I am wrong. But I feel there are a lot of things which could be improved in the school with regards to helping other members of staff.

A4 felt threatened by the implied criticism and was able to turn the disagreement into praise for B4's adaptable and co-operative approach. B4 subsequently clarified his statement by saying, "But I am talking about other members of staff." Or perhaps B4 recognised A4's displeasure and looked for a way out of the dilemma? It is interesting to note that A4's more adventurous questioning has provoked a greater degree of interaction than occurred in interview 3. A comparison of figure 5.3.3 with figure 5.4.3 shows that B3/B4 gave a greater positive emotional response in interview 4. A4 effectively forced him to be aware of the interviewer as someone who is prepared to make legitimate statements about B4's performance. This is a contentious area in appraisal interviewing and will be considered further in a later chapter. The appraiser runs the risk of intimidating and alienating the appraisee, but on the other hand, it can be very effective in leading the appraisee towards greater self-awareness.

Figure 5.4.4 shows a fairly close matching of interview perceptions, except that A4 thought he had a tendency to talk too much, and B4 thought A4 talked too little. B4's list of actions is much more



Figure 5.4.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A4

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B4

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Flexible

Frank ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 ~~X~~ 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

a) Possibility of understudy role.

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) Feedback sessions related to new courses needed.
- b) An awareness of each others classroom technique.
- c) Classroom posters, especially to do with new course.
- d) More audio-visual material.
- e) For me to 'polish-up' some materials regarding presentation.

detailed than that written by A4.

#### General conclusions

Very little use was made of the proforma in this interview. Instead, 'topical' items came to the surface and remained - notably curriculum development and career development. The interview contained a great deal of opinion sharing from both participants. It was task orientated, intense, and purposeful. B4 was happy to explore ideas frankly, and at length, and required little prompting. A4 was not backward in giving his own perspective on matters - he was also interested in gaining feedback regarding the curriculum development.

This interview has raised some other important general points. Firstly, there is the question of the extent to which other members of staff should be discussed. What should be the appraiser's reaction if an appraisee launches a verbal attack on a third party? Secondly, there is the issue of whether carefully phrased criticism helps or hinders the appraisee in making judgements about himself.

## INTERVIEW 5

This interview involved the Head of the English Faculty (B5), who is also A2/A2a, and the Deputy Head responsible for the 'curriculum' (A5). It lasted for approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. Although the interview was taped, A5 did not wish to pass on the tape for analysis.

The interview was unsatisfactory and this section attempts to identify the reasons for this. Even without the tape this is possible because other sources of data have been utilised:

1. Interview Analysis questionnaires were completed by both participants.
2. I had a discussion with each participant separately about the interview.
3. Written remarks on why the interview was a failure were provided by both on request, and in the case of B5 these were very detailed.
4. Copies of the appraisal interview "report", written by A5, and a letter of response to this written by B5, were also available.

That there is no doubt that the interview was largely unsuccessful is shown by figure 5.5.1. B5 was clearly dissatisfied with the interview, perceiving A5 to be inconsiderate, with too much to say,

Figure 5.5.1 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A5

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B5

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 ~~X~~ 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 ~~X~~ 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 ~~X~~ 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 ~~X~~ 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 ~~X~~ 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 ~~X~~ 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:



and disinterested in her problems. A5's perceptions were non-committal, especially concerning his own behaviour. Nevertheless, it is clear that he was not satisfied either with his performance, or B5's performance, and neither, in his view, were appraisal objectives achieved.

#### The viewpoint of A5

A5 identified a number of factors that account for the failure of the interview:

1. "Appraiser physically unwell".
2. A5 had been informed that day that his daughter had been involved in an accident.
3. "Appraiser already had a 'difficult' appraisal interview earlier in the day with another member of staff".
4. "A specific incident involving the appraisee's faculty had occurred within the past 24 hours which coloured judgements".
5. "It also shows that period 7/8 is not the time to carry out an appraisal interview - first time I have ever held one at this time!"

A5 does not refer to the content of the interview or the kind of interaction that took place. Most of the factors he identifies are external or circumstantial and, it could be suggested, read rather

like 'excuses'. He does not refer specifically to his own behaviour, or that of B5, but there is a hint of self blame implied by his reasons, suggesting as they do, that he was 'off-form'.

#### The viewpoint of B5

In a prelude to her written remarks B5 refers to them as, "... emotive - I suppose it's my anger at such an experience". In her outline of the content of the interview, B5 mentions a number of topics raised by A5 on which they had a substantial difference of opinion. These include: a specific incident regarding a member of the English faculty staff, the speed with which innovation should take place, the behaviour of the faculty with regard to attendance at assemblies and punctuality, and the degree of "whole school awareness" possessed by the English faculty. B5 admits to being extremely angry and disappointed with these perceived attacks, and points out that her faculty has enormous problems which she has been able to solve. She lists in detail the achievements in the areas of curriculum development and staff development. She makes reference to other grievances which she believes to be more important than the issues that have been raised by A5. Despite her anger, B5 also mentions some benefits gained from the exchange:

" (A5) is appreciative that I have talked so 'frankly'. I wonder whether it was sensible. However I think it reached a new level of communication - (A5) was forced to examine his priorities. I got a load off my chest! But I feel very disheartened by the whole thing. It's not how it should happen!"

B5 identifies the following reasons for her dissatisfaction:

1. A5 has been, "negative throughout".
2. There has been no praise, or recognition of her achievements, which she believes are considerable.
3. A5 has, "raised new issues", not on the proforma or brought up during the interview by B5.
4. A5 has not, "listened to me!!"
5. A5 has, "no interest in the future of the faculty".
6. A5 has no interest, "in my career development".

Clearly B5 was shocked by the items raised by A5 and admits that she,

"... finds this all highly inappropriate. It's new material, never previously mentioned. It points me toward the defensive and negative, which I'm not and don't intend to be".

B5 also believes that A5 is "hooked on" perceptions of her through union involvement and feedback that he has received from her Assistant Head of Year.

B5 has been infuriated and upset by the experience, and she clearly attaches the blame to A5 and the way he conducted the interview. She was not happy with either the topics discussed or the behaviour of A5. It appears that A5 touched some 'raw nerves' early on in the interview and the reaction that this provoked from B5 doomed the interview from the outset. B5 admits,

"I am sensitive about perceptions of my faculty staff, including myself".

### General Conclusions

In analysing an event that produced intense emotions it is to be expected that the evidence will be incomplete, and biased. The reasons for the failure of this interview are complex and difficult to disentangle. This is because the researcher needs to interpret conflicting actors' accounts. We do not usually remember situations or events exactly as they happened; what we remember is our interpretation of those situations or events. We tend to omit the inconsistent, to reshape the uncertain and give the interview an internal consistency which did not exist. Forgetting is not simply a loss of detail but a distortion into something else that constitutes a better pattern. A5 and B5 tend to remember an improved version of the original.

The researcher attempts to be objective but this is difficult, especially when he knows both participants well, on both a professional and social level.

And yet it is the insight that he gains from this privileged position that enables him to piece together as accurate a picture as is possible. Thus I would draw the following tentative conclusions with regard to interview 5:

1. Neither set out to have confrontation.



2. A5 did not think carefully enough about the impact his comments would have on B5. This lack of planning and forethought may be partly explained by the circumstances identified by A5.

3. The major responsibility for conducting an effective interview lies with the appraiser. A5 should have attempted to restore the emotional equilibrium once it became clear to him that he was alienating B5.

4. A5 does not adequately possess the high level of interpersonal skills required when dealing with very difficult issues in an appraisal interview. Perhaps, like appraisers A1 and A3, he would have been better off not raising contentious issues at all.

5. B5's expectations of the interview were not met at all. A5 did not give the opportunity for B5 to 'self-appraise'. Later in the interview, B5 seized the floor herself in frustration and with antagonism.

6. B5 is very sensitive about her work. A5 did not recognise the importance of this.

7. There can be no doubt that, although distasteful, the interview was a learning experience for both participants.

8. More so than the previous five interviews, and indeed in

the ones to follow, interview 5 illustrates the need for training in the skills of appraisal interviewing.

## INTERVIEW 6

A6 is the Head of the Creative Studies Faculty but he has also been performing a role as acting Deputy Head. B6 (also B1), is the Head of the Craft, Design, and Technology Department which has four other full-time members of staff, one of whom is A6. The 'Fulmer' project is a curriculum development initiative funded partly by outside agencies. It is operating throughout the school and it is concerned with promoting more relevant learning experiences in relation to the needs of industry. B6 is the tutor of a second year group notorious for the discipline difficulties they present to many staff who teach them. The study school faces the prospect of closure, and 'Action' is the campaign to save it. The interview lasted for 33 minutes.

### Content Analysis

A6 begins by asking B6 how things have gone and alludes to the fact that it has been a "difficult year in many ways". B6 concurs and refers to difficulties such as the shortage of time to get round and speak to staff in the department. The time problem is explored further by B6, and he mentions that animosity has crept in, which department meetings would have given an opportunity to de-fuse. B6 feels frustrated at this lack of communication. B6 recognises his work with the lower school as a major achievement.

When asked to expand upon his comments on the proforma about the high status of the C.D.T. department, B6 bases this on what he hears informally and by a comparison with other departments. A6 agrees that this reputation has been achieved over the years. B6 suggests

that it is partly due to good discipline giving an "organised appearance". B6 believes also that status is high outside the school, and mentions as evidence of this the fact that visitors often come to the department to see "good practice".

The main item of content relates to the staff of the department - B6 is clearly dissatisfied with the approach of many of them:

6.1.1 B6: If I can quote him from this morning: I came in and said, "Morning, how are you getting on?" He said, "Drifting along", and that seems typical of B's. sort of approach and attitude.

B6 complains about B's lack of initiative but feels that he might be able to motivate B. if he had more time. Similarly, for another member of the department:

6.2.1 B6: D. is going backwards in fact. He came out of college with a few ideas, and when he came out he adopted the design approach. Of late his work has taken on a very didactic and a closed approach. In other words he doesn't let the kids work through their ideas and he's ending up with fifteen rather similar....

6.2.2 A6: The same, yeah....

6.2.3 B6: I've not got round to talking to him yet - this is something I've got to tackle.

B6 goes on to describe a specific example of D's unimaginative approach. A6 thinks that D. is taking the easy way out and continues by pointing out the need to change D.'s approach for GCSE. B6 does not want to confront D. and he hopes that D. will alter his teaching:

6.3.1 B6: I'd like him to drift back on course, as it were - but yeah, it will have to be broached.



B6 regrets his lack of time to influence graphics, which A6 teaches, but affirms the scope in this subject. He hopes that the new appointment will stimulate both the curriculum and other staff. There is some discussion of technician time and A6 explains that he wants to appoint someone who can work in art, home economics, and C.D.T. In the final section on staff, B6 praises the only person who has been able to move things forward, and he recognises what a loss this teacher will be on leaving. In particular, both A6 and B6 refer to the excellent work J. has done with "Young Enterprise" and in the lower school.

When asked about the rooming plans for next year B6 explains where the new member of staff will be located. A6 suggests that one room is changed to a multi-media workshop and B6 explains that a compromise has already been reached, and goes on to mention that he wants to involve other staff in the room re-organisation proposals.

B6's comments on the 'Fulmer' project include reference to hard work and financial benefits. Classroom success has depended upon the teacher and further reference is made to the weaknesses of certain staff, although B6 admits that the lack of initiative shown by staff may be partly his fault.

B6 recognises that there is always room for improvement in his own classroom teaching, and he resents the fact that his administrative tasks get in the way of teaching:

6.4.1 B6: The admin. side and the department heads's side, has got in the way of teaching - it always does and that's one of the reasons why I constantly try to stay out of the admin. side because I think the teaching is the first thing, and

should receive the sort of first allotment of time really. But as far as the lesson - on task time - is concerned, yeah, I'm quite happy with it and the way I approach things. I'm always looking for new ideas of course.

A6 is complimentary about B6's teaching ability:

6.5.1 A6: I mean, I think it has been successful. I'm always very, very impressed on going down to the workshop and seeing the way kids respond. I mean they're always busy, they're working well, thinking about what they're doing. There's a super atmosphere when you go in.

6.5.2 B6: I work hard on the atmosphere.

6.5.3 A6: Yeah.

6.5.4 B6: To the detriment, perhaps, of some of the content.

6.5.5 A6: Yeah, I mean they're not always the greatest kids, are they? The nice thing is that they are making a contribution, they do know what they're doing and they do come up with things that they want.

When asked about resources, B6 admits to havng no complaints and, using a specific example, explains how equipment is looked after in the department. A6 gives credit to B6 in his efforts to re-coup money from pupils.

When asked about his contribution to the school as a whole, B6 refers to the period of withdrawal of goodwill, and explains that his contribution has been more than could have been expected. Whilst he accepts that he could now contribute more, he believes in striking the right balance between time spent in, and out, of school. B6 felt that there was implied criticism but A6 was quick to refute this.

The conversation moves quickly on to a discussion of B6's tutor group, and he refers to the time it has taken with counselling etc.,

but feels that progress is being made.

A6 reverts to discussion of the department and asks B6 about his plans for next year. B6 identifies the need to consolidate and concentrate on teaching and supporting the staff:

6.61 B6: The pioneering spirit that we've always shown might have to be delayed, or put on the shelf, perhaps.

A6 attempts to draw the interview to a close by complimenting B6 again on his work and generally summing up. However, B6 expresses the view that the perceptions of senior staff about other people are inaccurate and that he would like to influence this. A6 attributes this to a lack of meetings and his own dual role. Time is once again recognised as a major obstacle.

B6 refers to his own future at the school and the possibility of another post at a local school. A6 says that he will not stand in his way even though he would prefer to keep him. B6 confirms that his interests lie in the subject and not administrative or pastoral work. A6 concludes the interview with a remark that most things have been covered.

The content of this interview certainly included a look back as well as a look ahead, and in fact covered a remarkably wide range of major themes:

1. The need for more time
2. The status of the department
3. Individual members of the department



4. Evaluation of the 'Fulmer' project
5. B6's teaching
6. Resources
7. B6's contribution to the school as a whole
8. B6's tutor group

The role that B6 plays as a department head influenced the content to a large extent (items 1,2,3,4, and 6). This is also illustrated by the large number of items classified at the DEPT. level in figure 5.6.1. Within this category, discussion about other members of the department - especially the weaker ones - dominated the interview. In figure 5.6.2, OTHER STAFF accounted for 10 minutes time - almost one third of the interview. It could be argued that it is perfectly appropriate to use appraisal interview time in this way. In any case, as figure 5.6.1 illustrates, the interview was very well balanced between the three main content categories, with the emphasis, quite rightly, being on departmental matters. (MANAGEMENT and ADMINISTRATION accounted for 5 minutes).

There can be no doubt that A6 stepped outside the appraisal system at the study school when he raised the question of B6's tutor group. This should obviously be left to the interview with B6's Head of Year. However, in the period of post-industrial action, fewer appraisal interviews were taking place, and A6 may have believed, or known, that B6 would not be having his 'pastoral' interview. In this case, it would be acceptable to raise a very important part of B6's work.



Figure 5.6.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 6

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

Lack of time.

Relationship with tutor group

Success with lower school C.D.T.

Class teaching success.

Possibility of another post.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

Motivating members of the department.

Status of C.D.T.

The potential of the new appointment.

Room re-organisation.

Evaluation of 'Fulmer' project.

Administration as a chore.

Satisfaction with resourcing of the department.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

The effect of industrial action.

Senior staff perceptions.

Figure 5.6.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 6

Job Satisfaction	3.5
Job Dissatisfaction	2
Praise	3.5
Teaching	0.5
Plans/Targets	0
UNSET	0
Career Development	1
Other Staff	10
Management & Admin.	5
Curriculum	1.5
Resources	3
Whole School Issues	1
Individual Pupils	0
Classes	2
Other	0
Total	33 minutes

## Process Analysis

The profile (figure 5.6.3) illustrates clearly that B6 spent most of his time (57%) giving opinions. He certainly dominated the interview, spending 82% of the time talking. Yet although A6 allowed B6 to talk freely, he remained in control. On almost every occasion it was A6 who raised the new topic - mostly by using the proforma. He moved steadily - and perhaps rather routinely - from one area to the next. A6 explained afterwards that this was due to the fact that he had only received the proforma minutes before the interview. Except towards the end, there were few major digressions from the structure provided by the sheets. Possibly as a result of this, there was a noticeable shortage of what could be described as really 'animated' talk. There was a definite pattern of interaction: A6 asked a question (average utterance length = 8 seconds), and B6 responded at length (average utterance length = 37 seconds). A6's requests for an opinion were consistently brief and open ended, although when expressing his own opinion, he took considerably longer - although nowhere near as much time as B6.

B6 is happy to reflect upon the position in the school of the department he runs, although not without a hint of embarrassment:

6.7.1 A6: You put that the department had reasonable status in the school.

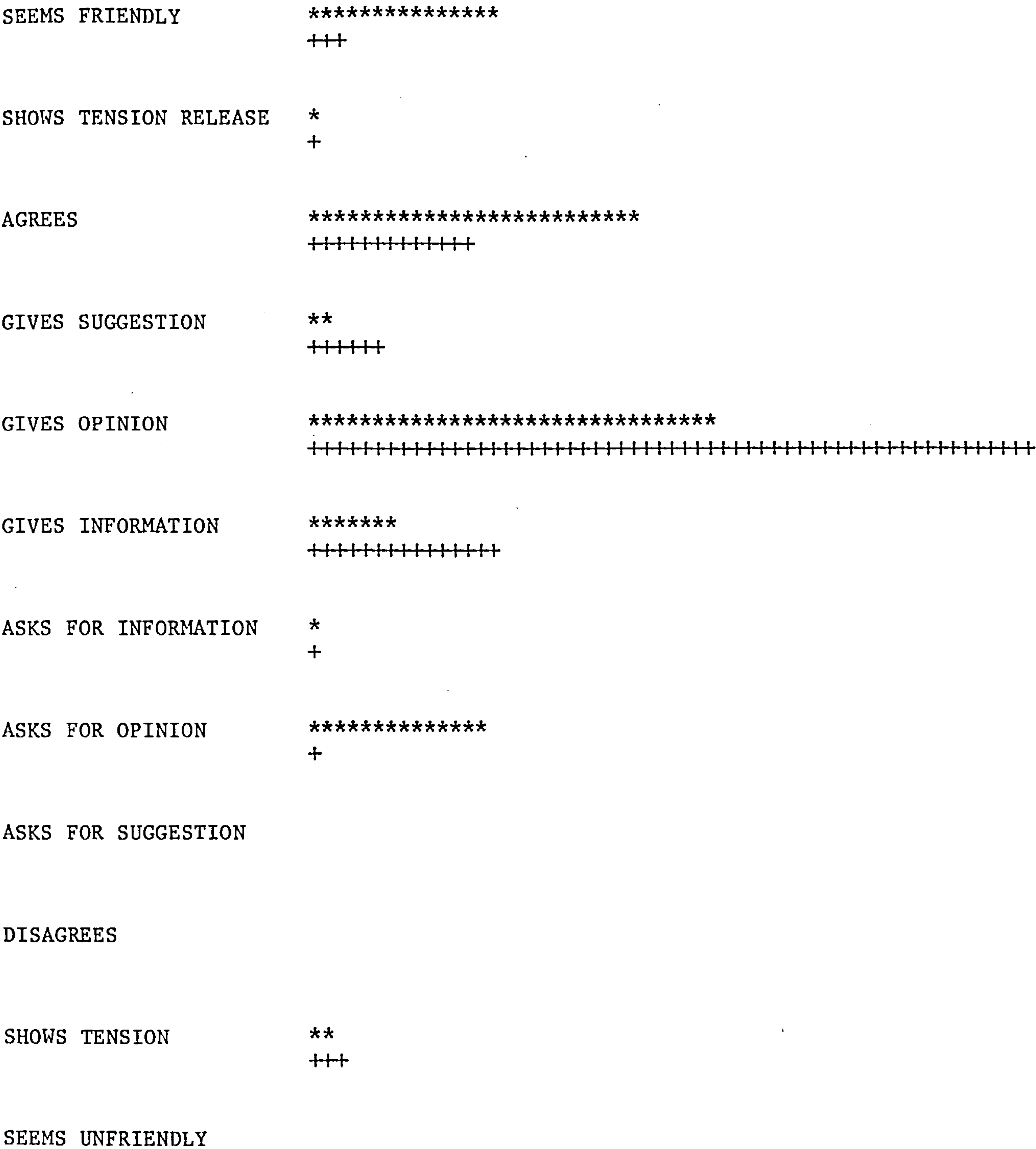
6.7.2 B6: Yeah.

6.7.3 A6: What do you base that on?

6.7.4 B6: Well, it can be nothing else but informal talk about people's views of other departments and the feedback I get, which I obviously perceive as favourable. I get the occasional black comment but certainly if you compare it with what goes on in other departments, and the way that some

Figure 5.6.3

VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 6



0 10 20 30 40 50  
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF UTTERANCES BY A6: \* B6: +



departments are spoken about, then ours comes out fairly near the top. That's my personal, biased opinion! (laughter)

A6 concurs with virtually all of the opinions expressed by B6. The profile indicates this fairly high level of agreement, which in most cases is in the form of "yeah, yeah" and "mhm-hmm". However, on occasions, this is more formally expressed by A6 and is a kind of 'response matching' by imitation. For example, A6 follows B6's last comment about the department's status with:

6.8.1 A6: Well, I mean, I'd support that because, obviously, I've got a strong feeling about it...

6.8.2 B6: Yeah.

6.8.3 A6: I think over the years we have achieved a reputation and we've worked hard for it.

6.8.4 B6: Yes, I think so, but it's difficult to pinpoint why. I feel the discipline is one thing. It's always been seen to be good over here and that goes some way to getting an organised appearance to the place.

6.8.5 A6: I mean there are no weak links on discipline are there?

6.8.6 B6: No there's not, no.

B6 is not at all reserved, and neither is he afraid to identify areas of concern:

6.9.1 A6: How about the staff that you've got? What - how are they doing?

6.9.2 B6: Well, er, yes. I'm not entirely satisfied, I must say, with the way things - the way the staffing has gone - or is going.

B6's lengthy discourse about staff tends to give the impression that he is rather negative. However, it could be suggested that these are legitimate problems that A6 ought to know about, and perhaps do something about. B6's sense of despair is illustrated below:

6.10.1 B6: ...to be quite honest I'm at a loss really to see what I could do to get him to adopt my attitude.

A6 agrees entirely with the problem as B6 has described it, but it is B6 who suggests that the solution lies in finding more time to help staff. Unfortunately, A6 does not attempt to pursue the solution offered by probing him about how more time can be found for what is clearly a crucial task for a head of department. A6's silence on the matter suggests that he believes it is simply something to be lived with.

One of the most difficult topics discussed in this interview - in terms of its emotional stability - concerns B6's contribution to the wider life of the school:

6.11.1 A6: What sort of contribution to the school do you think you are making?

6.11.2 B6: Um - well, there was a time when - during the action - myself and my fellows withdrew quite a lot of contribution to the school. I think, I feel now that with the present "Action" that I'm getting back into it. Yeah, I feel that my contribution to the school has been just a bit more than could have been expected. I could, I could, er, probably contribute a bit more - I would accept that, at this stage - but I think a balance has to be struck between the amount of time and effort you spend in school and your outside interests. So, I suppose I would say that my contribution is as much as I would like it to be. And I think that it's perfectly adequate, and I don't think I would feel happy if I were criticised as being lacking in any sense.

6.11.3 A6: Um, I wasn't being critical...

6.11.4 B6: I know.

6.11.5 A6: I was just sort of making you reflect on how you saw it.

6.11.6 B6: Yeah, I realise that.

During the period of industrial action, the different stances taken

by members of staff was a source of potential conflict. I suspect that A6 was surprised when B6 interpreted his question in this way - B6 certainly gave a rather hesitant and defensive reply. A6 was anxious to de-fuse the situation and moved on briskly.

There was also some tension at the end of the interview when B6, rather awkwardly, raised the idea that senior staff perceive people in the wrong way. A6 defensively blames the lack of meetings and his own role conflict. A6 recognises the tension and is reluctant to pursue the issue and they both agree that lack of time is the problem. If B6's perception of A6's role conflict is an area of concern, it is probably too much of a strain on the emotional harmony to try and deal with it in B6's self-appraisal interview. Both are anxious to avoid the negative emotional responses that this may engender. Perhaps B6 should raise this in a separate meeting. In this incident, one gets the feeling that B6 was torn between maintaining a cordial atmosphere and airing a grievance. He did not wish to force the issue - A6 certainly did not wish to explore it. B6 may have left the interview feeling that he had failed to probe more deeply - A6 was probably relieved that the issue had been side-stepped.

A6's method of showing a positive emotional response is by reinforcing and agreeing with a remark made by B6, for example over room re-organisation and also:

6.12.1 B6: ...and that's the sort of thing you want in a department like this.

6.12.2 A6: She doesn't make a lot of fuss about it but it is done and if you ask her for something it's there as soon as you could wish for it.



Whilst this technique achieves the desired effect, A6 finds it difficult to make a positive emotional response to B6 as a person - the degree of 'inclusion' and 'affection' is low. A6 recognises the importance of complimenting B6 about his work, but it lacks the genuine warmth that A2 is able to convey, for example. In summing up the interview, A6 gives the following rather awkward speech - possibly out of obligation rather than real feeling:

6.13.1 A6: Well, I think what I want to say at this stage is that I very much value the work that you've done this year. Um, and I know that, you know, it has been a hard year and it has been a difficult year, and I know that you've got strong union ties. You have obviously followed the party line as far as possible, but when it's been between school and the union then you've tried to temper the balance of that, and that's been important. I recognise the effort and the contribution that you've made this year. Um, I mean, one of the nice things is of course that you've been here for some time, you know the work, but most of all, as I've gone round my GCSE training, the thing that has impressed me is just how much on line our foundation work is.

6.13.2 B6: mhm-hmm.

6.13.3 A6: I'm sure that's largely, in fact completely, attributable to you and J. - to the work that you've done to develop that.

The Interview Analysis Forms (figure 5.6.4) indicate that A6 was rather more satisfied with the interview than B6. A6 got through it unscathed - B6 may have felt a little frustrated. Both felt that A6 could have been more frank - possibly by simply talking a bit more. A6's view of the actions agreed relate to specific head of department tasks. B6's list is much wider in scope.

## General Conclusions

B6 performed the self-appraisal role well, giving lengthy opinions



Figure 5.6.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A6

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 ~~X~~ 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 6 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely 1 ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) Look into technician time.
- b) B6 to monitor B. and D. closely to make sure they stick to the syllabus.
- c) Review the responsibilities and how we use rooms.

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B6

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) Involve D. in the department more.
- b) Not to engage in quite so much pioneering next term (year?)
- c) To look for a post in another school - with one particularly in mind.

about his work with candour and fluency. His assessments were fairly balanced - being prepared to give his department credit where it was due, as well as admitting to his own shortcomings and the problems that he has with certain members of the department.

Without imposing himself, A6 was successful in ensuring that a very wide range of topics was discussed. A6 used the proforma to help him structure the interview, but did not let this confine B6 in any way. The style adopted by A6 included the use of open ended 'general leads' with reinforcing opinions interjected on a number of occasions.

Without doubt, the recurring thread of the interview is the lack of time for B6 to deal with the problems he has identified. A6 does little to develop this theme, perhaps because he sees it as B6's responsibility to deal with it, or possibly because he believes that there is no solution. However, it could be argued that A6 could have suggested ways of finding time for important tasks - by re-allocating priorities, or by offering to provide some of his own time, for example. Thus, A6 has not really grasped the opportunity to help B6 with his major problem.

This interview was much more purposeful than the one that B6/B1 had the previous year with his Head of Year (interview number 1). On both occasions the appraisers were rather routine and impersonal in their approach, yet in this interview the content was more wide-ranging, and B6 found it much easier to talk, (his mean utterance length was 68% higher). Undoubtedly, this is due mainly to the fact that B6's responsibilities as a classroom teacher and

department head occupy a far greater proportion of time and energy in his professional life than his duties as a tutor - although the latter role is taken very seriously indeed by B6.

Both were concerned to maintain the emotional equilibrium - there were no utterances classified as 'disagrees' or 'seems unfriendly' - even though there were two tension items that surfaced towards the end of the interview. Interestingly, both of these are related to A6's dual role as Faculty Head and Deputy Head.

This interview highlights the potential conflict between performance of the task and the maintenance of emotional stability. In this case, affiliative behaviour - though not excessive - from both participants predominated. Negative actions were both suppressed and camouflaged, thus avoiding the downward spiral that was seen to be so destructive in interview 5.



## INTERVIEW 7

A7 is the Head of the English Faculty (A7 is also A2/A2a/B5). B7 teaches English but her main role is as teacher in charge of 'individual support', which comes under the auspices of English. B7 is new to the school and it is her first appraisal interview therefore. The interview lasted for 60 minutes.

### Content analysis

A7 asks B7 to remind herself of the comments made on the proforma, and begins the interview by picking up the idea of relationships, and especially the problems that B7 has had with 4th and 5th years (years 10 and 11). B7 refers to some behavioural problems, the mixed ability status of the group, and a poor start, due to the fact that she expected too much:

7.1.1 B7: ....and they don't really know me so I think I'm paying the price for that.

B7 also blames lessons earlier in the day for putting the pupils on a "high", or having to teach them last lesson of the day. Although students have done their course work and responded to her suggestions, B7 feels that it depends on their mood and they both refer to the importance of classroom relationships. When asked about her achievements with this group, B7 doubts whether simply getting them through the exam is enough. A7 suggests that her pupils see her in a different way:

7.2.1 A7: Doesn't that also, though, reflect the kind of relationship you have with them? That they are actually



relating to you as a person, for example, "You're going to die when you see this" (a pupil comment previously recalled by B7). They are seeing you as a person, not as an authoritarian figure. But actually they're achieving something for you. Doesn't that seem a positive step?

7.2.2 B7: Well, to be positive, because most of the time I do see this in the black - it's probably the group I go home and worry about most, or try to do more work for, and really try to think out the lesson and all the pitfalls - that's the one I do worry about. Yes that's positive and I know that we can have some very good discussions, which I think is very valuable, but, I would like also for them to see me as a bit more authoritarian. It's funny, because I'm naturally very aggressive with a lot of adults - not always defensively - because I feel so assertive.

B7 continues to explain that she has more sympathy for children than adults and points out that she may be measuring success by other teachers' standards:

7.3.1 B7: ... when I walk past the classrooms and I can see the silence, the books open, and there's nothing more...

7.3.2 A7: Right, so, that's a very important point. Do you feel that there is an expectation upon you to reach a certain measure of a kind of approved success - a school identified success? And if you do, what does that represent?

After asking for clarification, B7 tries to give a balanced answer with regard to 'traditional' and 'progressive' methods in education, but feels that she is not being too successful:

7.4.1 B7: Because I don't think I've created the correct environment to do it in. I know what I'm striving towards but I don't think I've created that particular atmosphere.

A7 suggests that she may be too optimistic in hoping to achieve this in her first year. B7 agrees and adds that her naivety, the pupils' home backgrounds, and their need to rebel, may preclude this. The nature of B7's classroom atmosphere is probed more deeply, the possibility of behaviour modification from B7 and qualities

required, is discussed further:

7.5.1 B7: So perhaps on one side, yes, I'm gonna have to take more control and be more assertive, but on the other hand I'm gonna have to pull back...

7.5.2 A7: So it's a kind of control with tolerance?

7.5.3 B7: Yes.

7.5.4 A7: And a great deal of personal awareness.

A7 talks about finding compatibility between B7's expectations and the pupils' expectations, and asks specifically how the pupils know what her expectations are. B7 explains this by referring to course work requirements and occasionally by getting on her "high horse". A7 gets her to reflect upon this. A7 pursues the point about expectations and B7 describes various control techniques that she adopts, and points out that pupils respond to her in this case as a 'teacher'.

A7 tries to boost B7's confidence and B7 replies that she sets herself very high standards. A7 gets her to think more carefully about the criteria used to measure success by asking her to compare a 1st year (year 7) group with the 4th year (year 10) class. B7 outlines what she has achieved with the 1st year group.

Eventually,

7.6.1 B7: I think I'm as good as any of the 1st year teachers this year.

7.6.2 A7: Now, why does that feeling not transfer to your 4th years?

B7 outlines the reasons why it is impossible to compare the two groups, while A7 suggests that the lack of success with the 4th year

group is a result of situational factors, not B7's teaching ability, and that being a 1st year tutor is also a great help. B7 admits that things may get better in the 5th year although she insists on recognising that it is the teacher's responsibility to work effectively with each class. Nevertheless, B7 expresses a more positive feeling about the group next year:

7.7.1 B7: But I'm expecting to say, "Well I'm more on top of the situation", and to say, "I can do different things" - because they've done different things with me.

7.7.2 A7: You actually have a greater repertoire.

A7 talks about the personal nature of teaching, and the need for self-awareness and integrity. B7 alludes to "highs" and "lows" in her teaching life, and the fact that she takes everything to heart. A7 responds:

7.8.1 A7: Tell me what you need. Do you know what you need when you have a low and is there any way...

7.8.2 B7: Perhaps a good stiff whisky!

7.8.3 A7: (laughter) Is there any way I could be of better support to you?

B7 pays tribute to A7 for the help she has already received but does not want to be seen as running for help. She goes on to explain how the "lows" can affect her home life and she reflects upon this in a philosophical manner. A7 suggests that the school context can be to blame and that B7 really has a very acute awareness of what children need. This section of the interview ends with B7 hoping to be more positive about the 4th year group next year.

The conversation turns to 'individual support', the relevance of the



skills learned, and the possibility of in-service training for other staff on children with learning difficulties. B7 describes her relationships with other staff who have had 'individual support' queries. A7 compliments B7 on her approachability and willingness to help other staff. B7 modestly under-rates herself in this respect. They refer briefly to the pros and cons of withdrawing pupils from lessons, as opposed to individual support teachers working in normal lessons. A7 ties this in with the in-service training discussions and B7 refers to the importance of common policies for children with special needs. A7 points out the importance of convincing senior staff of the vital role played by individual support in the school, and asks B7 for some ideas on how this can be achieved. B7's reply includes reference to data gathering, "Warnock", Government policy, and parental involvement, while A7 suggests getting the Head into lessons and linking up with 'Book Week'.

Sensing the pressure of time, A7 praises B7 at length and B7 reciprocates by complimenting A7, but says that she was not totally clear what was expected of her at the beginning of the year. A7 explains that she had total confidence in her ability and did not want to impose ideas on her about how 'individual support' was to be set up.

B7 praises the staff who have worked in the department, but regrets that she had not taken the time to communicate this to the staff concerned. A7 suggests that expressed appreciation can never come too late.



The need to go to lunch curtails the interview, but not before they look at the proforma and run through very quickly a few of the comments. They agree that most things had been included in their discussion.

As figure 5.7.1 shows, the content of this interview was very much oriented towards B7 as an individual - her relationships with pupils, classroom atmosphere, self-awareness, and the other items listed in the 'INDIVIDUAL' section. These aspects were explored in considerable depth as B7 reflected at length on these issues. Her capacity for introspection was fuelled by a series of penetrating questions from A7.

In complete contrast to interview 6, the proforma was used hardly at all to determine content. Although it prompted the initial discussion of the 4th year (year 10) group, the conversation flowed naturally thereafter. The observation that A7/A2/A2a makes little use of the proforma was made in interview 2.

Apart from the large early slice generated by the discussion of the problem 4th year group (4.5 minutes on CLASSES in figure 5.7.2), it is difficult to identify stages or sections in this interview - rather the work and personality of B7 permeates the whole discussion. Even the DEPT. and WHOLE SCHOOL items were alluded to as part of the mainstream thread of conversation that wound itself around the persona of B7. In figure 5.7.2 this is reflected in the fact that 24 minutes (40%) of the interview, is devoted to the category TEACHING, which was defined in Chapter Three as the teaching activity relating directly to one of the participants.

Figure 5.7.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 7

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

Problems with a 4th year class.  
B7's expectations and how she communicates these.  
Perception of B7's pupils about her.  
B7's educational philosophy.  
Classroom atmosphere.  
B7's self-concept.  
The relationship between A7 and B7.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

Pupils' perception of English.  
The organisation of 'individual support'.  
B7's views of the English faculty.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

The effect of previous lessons on pupils' attitudes.  
Influence of school ethos on B7's classroom performance.  
INSET on 'individual support'.  
B7's relationship with staff.  
Perceptions of senior staff about 'individual support'.

Figure 5.7.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 7

Job Satisfaction	0.5
Job Dissatisfaction	4
Praise	4.5
Teaching	24
Plans/Targets	6
UNSET	1.5
Career Development	0
Other Staff	2
Management & Admin.	2.5
Curriculum	4.5
Resources	0
Whole School Issues	1
Individual Pupils	0
Classes	4.5
Other	5
Total	60 minutes

Many of these items came up towards the end of the interview and I suspect that a much wider range of topics would have been talked about if the discussion had not been cut short by the lunch break. Thus one gets the impression that the interview was a little unbalanced - but it was really too short. There can be no doubt that the content was relevant - heavily oriented, as it was, - in favour of self-appraisal. However one could argue that, - and figure 5.7.2 indicates this, - depth has been achieved at the expense of breadth. This is no bad thing, since the evidence from many of the other interviews is that issues are dealt with rather briefly and at a superficial level. One could argue that discussing one or two aspects of a teacher's professional life properly is better than skimming over a greater number of items.

Nevertheless, there were many things written down on the sheets that I suspect B7 may wished to have discussed further, but they were hurriedly dismissed by A7 at the end of the interview, under the pressure of time:

7.9.1 A7: Do you want to go to lunch?

7.9.2 B7: Sorry - go on.

7.9.3 A7: I'm quite happy with this, but if you feel...

7.9.4 B7: I don't know - is there anything? - I think we've covered just about everything...

7.9.5 A7: (interrupting and with emphasis) I think so, very much. I mean, I haven't sort of taken them in the form they were...

7.9.6 B7: Yes, I mean there's bits and pieces. 'Preparation of lessons and marking', I mean, to me that's part of your job - you do it.

7.9.7 A7: Yeah, yes, those sort of things, to be honest, I'm not concerned about. These things are far more important.



7.9.8 B7: We've covered 'class control and teaching method' in what we were talking about with the group. The only one we didn't cover was 'care of books and equipment'. I admit to being careless....

7.9.9 A7: There's nothing to discuss, 'cos that's fine.

7.9.10 B7: No, um... and that I think we've discussed anyway. That to me is all part of...

7.9.11 A7: Yes.

7.9.12 B7: ... general discussion.

7.9.13 A7: This is all part of what we've discussed, and in a way an appraisal is all about these things being implicit in it. Well certainly for me...

7.9.14 B7: Unless you've never marked a book all year - or you just put a tick every time - or something, you know.

7.9.15 A7: Yes, and I wouldn't be discussing that with you now because it's a bit bloody late to come and say, 'How about this...?'

7.9.16 B7: Yes.

The extract above illustrates that A7's view of an appraisal discussion as an holistic and integrated event, has influenced the content - and process - of this interview to a very large extent. When one considers that A7 is a very articulate, confident, and persuasive person, and in addition, carries all the weight of her role as appraiser and status as faculty head, it is not surprising to find that B7 concedes that items on the proforma have been covered. There are two interesting issues that arise from this:

1. Should not the appraisee be encouraged to determine the content of the interview, especially in a system where the emphasis is clearly on self-appraisal? For example, to what extent has A7's domination and tight control inhibited B7 from introducing items herself?

2. On the other hand, the lack of direction shown by many appraisers in other interviews has limited their input, reduced their opportunities to interact with and influence appraisees, and led to the omission of issues that the appraiser ought to raise. In other words, certain appraisal objectives may not be achieved.

In terms of interview content, a balance has to be struck between allowing the self-identification of appraisee's needs and concerns; and the appraiser's responsibility to develop these fully, interact in a productive manner, and keep control.

#### Process Analysis

B7 spoke for 73% of the time, and as can be seen from the profile (figure 5.7.3), over 60% of her utterances were giving opinion, (mean utterance length = 27 seconds). There was also a relatively large proportion of information giving from B7, mainly by illustrating points with anecdotal material. Although A7 spoke for only 27% of the time, as already indicated, she was very much in control of the interview. A7's approach is businesslike and professional. Her requests for opinion were crisp and penetrating, although not in the slightest bit harsh (mean utterance length = 9 seconds). Many of her questions were prefaced as:

Are you happy with...

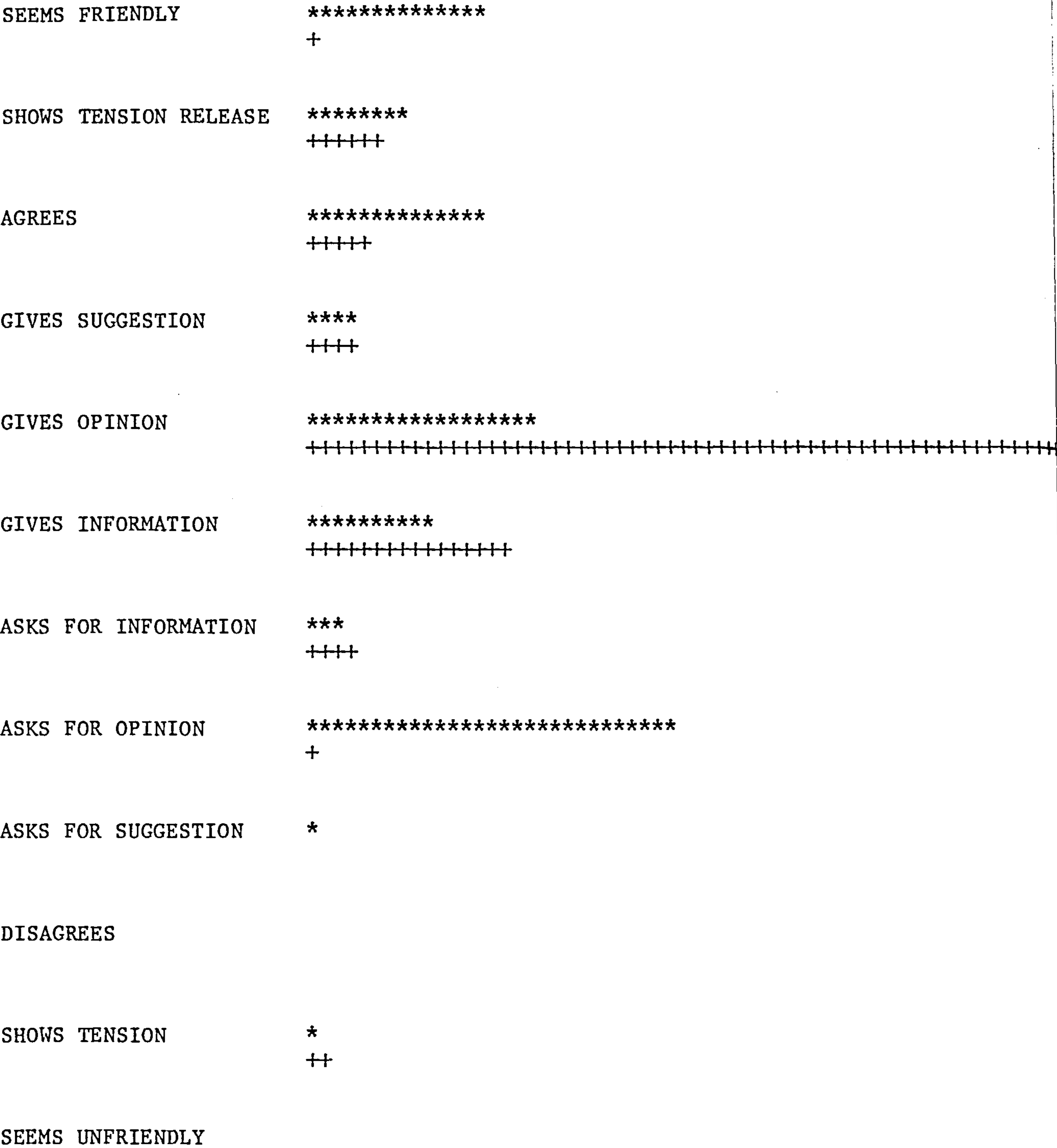
Do you feel...

How do you feel about...

A7 is particularly skilled in getting B7 to expand upon remarks and

Figure 5.7.3

VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 7



0 10 20 30 40 50 60  
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF UTTERANCES BY A7: \* B7: +

to analyse her thoughts more profoundly. For example, when responding to comments from B7 about mistakes she made early in the year:

7.10.1 A7: Do you want to develop that and tell me how you mean that?

A7 is persistent in her attempts to elicit more from B7, especially with regard to her inner feelings and emotions. The conversation sometimes takes on a flavour more characteristic of a psychiatrist's office:

7.11.1 A7: And in a sense, does the situation which you offer the children, and the atmosphere that you have in your group, enable them, almost, to rebel?

7.11.2 B7: Very likely, yes.

7.11.3 A7: Now, does that upset you and disturb you... or do you feel O.K. about that?

The profile (figure 5.7.3) indicates that A7 spends a large proportion of time giving positive emotional feedback, and she grasps every opportunity to compliment B7, (PRAISE = 4.5 minutes in figure 5.7.2). For example, when B7 says that the group have done their coursework, A7 remarks:

7.12.1 A7: Yeah, I think that's a great achievement.

Again, the following tribute is typical:

7.13.1 A7: I think you've been a fabulous addition. You have been what we wanted and ... you've been more really. You've exceeded my expectations. But I did feel you were a very able woman when you came, and that was why I wanted to have you. And you've manifested that in many ways. I probably don't come and listen to you enough 'cos you are full of untapped ideas.



B7 reciprocates immediately:

7.14.1 B7: Actually I was just going to say what I thought of the faculty. I like the faculty, full stop.

A7's compliment was much appreciated by B7 and may have come as something of a relief:

7.15.1 B7: ...and I have, the whole year, been concerned - more worried - about exactly what was expected.

A7's concern is to boost B7's confidence - not only because she recognises this as an appraisal objective, but also because B7 is rather modest, even negative, in her evaluation of her own teaching ability:

7.16.1 A7: ....because they have now tested you on that .. and she really does know what she's talking about in the way that she suggested to us at the beginning of the year - and that is an enormous success. Because, in a way, you've proven who you are to them - simply by your teaching.

In trying to mirror an opinion of B7 which is more positive, A7 is actually doing something FOR B7. She is not merely a sympathetic, active listener - she is the agent in attempting to change B7's self-image; and is therefore making the kind of input that most other appraisers are either unwilling or unable to make. For A7, the interview is as much a therapy session as an appraisal discussion. The excellent rapport that A7 has been able to develop in the interview is illustrated by the following extract:

7.17.1 A7: Is there anything, though, that you want me to think about, for you, for next year?

7.17.2 B7: That's a very difficult one, isn't it? I mean the fact that you've said it is like, good enough. To actually

say, "Well, I want A, B, and C", is very difficult. I mean, knowing that somebody's there, with back up support ... it's almost like being a child in a family - that is quite secure enough.

7.17.3 A7: Good ... and I think that's a wonderful comparison.

There can be no doubt that B7 left the interview feeling very satisfied by the experience. This is reflected in her assessment of A7 as shown by figure 5.7.4, where B7 gives her a "perfect score". Clearly then, the interview style adopted by A7 was perceived as highly effective. A7 too, is very satisfied with both her own behaviour and the outcome. There is a very close tie up, also, with regard to the 'actions agreed'.

As well as being supportive and complimentary, A7 gets B7 to think more constructively about her difficulties:

7.18.1 A7: Has it improved though, over the year? As your relationship has changed with them, has it improved ... or do you think this is a price you're going to pay?

Whilst A7 gives slightly fewer of her own opinions than in interviews 2 and 2a, (A7 is A2/A2a), she is not afraid to contribute an alternative perspective:

7.19.1 A7: You might think though, beyond yourself and the child, and put both of you in the context of the cosmos of the school.

7.19.2 B7: Yes.

7.19.3 A7: Because, you know, it can be, sometimes, not you or the child, but it can be 'the day'.

On occasions, I suspect that B7 finds this level of abstract thinking a little daunting or intimidating, and she tends to follow

Figure 5.7.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A7

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B7

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Flexible

Frank ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 ~~X~~ 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) Improve image of 'individual support'.
- b) Improve relationship with 5th year through personal awareness.
- c) A7 to support with 'ear' more often.
- d) INSET programme.

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) Continued support offered by A7.
- b) Individual support INSET for all staff.
- c) Invitation to Head to come and see lessons.
- d) To be more positive with 4th and 5th year groups.



up with more down-to-earth replies and concrete examples - often with a joke to release the tension she may anticipate at the prospect of trying to engage in erudite discussion.

Furthermore, there can be no doubt that B7 found one or two of A7's questions somewhat difficult to answer, and on occasions she asked A7 for clarification in order to gain thinking time. In the example below it could be that B7 was afraid that A7 would follow up the initial question with a request for B7's definition of 'education'. A7 was sensitive to the embarrassment and changed tack:

7.20.1 A7: Have you established in your own mind, quite clearly, what education is?

7.20.2 B7: (without conviction) I think so.

7.20.3 A7: Yeah, good. What qualities are you going to need in that sort of circumstance ... of having a truly educational environment, in your terms?

### General Conclusions

If the objective of appraisal is self-awareness and self-improvement, then this interview has been extremely successful. B7 has an improved self-image as a direct result of the interviewing skills of A7. she has a greater insight into her work BECAUSE A7 has accepted the responsibility to provide - almost provoke - it. This interview shows that there is more to helping someone than simply listening. B7 displayed a lack of confidence with a somewhat negative attitude - A7's response was to give confidence and be positive.

Whether B7 has been led, or manipulated, into greater self-awareness



is debatable - certainly she feels that she has benefitted from the experience without being patronised, and without resentment. It could be argued that this was achieved at the expense of restricted coverage and excessive control by A7. Whilst it may not have been orthodox in many respects, the interview was relevant and therapeutic. The appraisee and her feelings about work were central to the whole discussion, and the conversation took place in an atmosphere of warmth, concern, and integrity.

Perhaps in this interview we saw the playing out of roles that might easily be understood with reference to B7's own 'child/family' analogy.

## INTERVIEW 8

B8 is a part-time (0.5) teacher of commerce employed on a temporary contract, which has been extended for another year. She has also been teaching some English and Mathematics. Her main teaching commitment is in the Business Studies Department, the Head of which is referred to as J. B8 is recently returned into teaching and new to the school. This is her first appraisal interview with A8 (also A4), who is the head of the Social Studies Faculty. The interview lasted for 66 minutes.

### Content Analysis

A8 begins by complimenting B8 and he clarifies that she will be teaching 0.6 next year. Referring to the proforma, he picks up the problem of class control noted down by B8. She admits that it is not her strong point and that she is not getting enough out of the pupils:

8.1.1 B8: I think sometimes expectations and reality don't marry up. I can get very upset when I feel they're not working to a particular level, or though maybe the behaviour is alright.

She identifies the fact that pupils do not always listen when she is talking, even though they are quiet. B8 says that she finds it difficult to get lively discussion and interested participation. A8 suggests that she ask the pupils more questions, and goes on to explain the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. They agree the importance of working on the former, but discuss more punitive measures. B8 mentions how the use of the overhead

projector has helped, but refers to the difficulties of teaching mixed ability examination classes. She is dismayed that pupils appear to like dictation, copying notes, and "filling in gaps", because those activities require little thinking.

A8 outlines the methods he adopts when teaching pupils to take notes, and asks B8 whether she thinks notetaking is a valuable activity. She admits to being under no illusions about the fact that notes are rarely looked at again. A8 then explains how the process of notetaking can have some educational value.

B8 explains how some problems have resulted from being both new to the school, and new to the teaching of commerce, but she feels that she is developing more confidence with the subject matter, and that things are getting better.

B8 finds it difficult to make the subject come alive and A8 wonders whether this is due to the syllabus. He sets up a hypothetical situation and asks B8 what she should do in the ideal circumstances where syllabus constraints do not exist. In her reply, B8 refers to more activity based learning, more guest speakers, out of school visits, and missing out certain sections of the syllabus. She finds getting through the syllabus time consuming, and identifies the problem of classwork becoming routine. A8 admits to a similar problem and describes his own "routine trap" of teacher explanation followed by bookwork. However, he goes on to describe how he used fieldwork and role play to break up routine work and asks whether this can be done with commerce. B8 gives an example of some worthwhile role play work she has done, but again expresses concern



about the need to cover the syllabus. A8 predicts that substituting more exciting classwork for routine activities would make little difference to pupils' examination performances. B8 agrees that there is scope in commerce for more adventurous teaching approaches, and refers again to being new to both the school and subject.

The interview moves into a completely different area when B8 asks for elaboration on the departmental organisation problems that A8 has noted on the proforma. Both participants refer to the ineffectiveness of the department head (J.), although B8 does say that J. has tried to be helpful and supportive. B8 recalls an occasion when a visiting speaker made a fairly indifferent impact, and also mentions the problems she has encountered over the supply of video-cassettes arranged by J. When asked how she thinks such administrative inefficiency can be solved, B8 replies by saying that she feels disloyal. A8 suggests that one simply has to do the job oneself and ignore what J. is doing. B8 concurs. A8 confesses that he disposes of most of the memos he receives from J. After mentioning that the new GCSE syllabus should provide an impetus for commerce, they briefly discuss examination results. B8 says that she feels they are alright and they refer to teaching methods again. A8 asks whether B8 would like to visit other classes, and they refer to next year's timetable to see whether this is possible.

The discussion moves on to sixth form (year 12) work, and in particular, the Certificate in Pre-Vocational Education (CPVE) which B8 will be teaching next year for the first time. B8 talks in a positive way about CPVE, and looks forward also, to working with a fourth year (year 10) commerce group. They allude briefly to a



fifth year (year 11) class that she will be taking next year.

With a degree in economics/sociology, middle school training, and previously only having taught lower school humanities in a full-time post, B8 is concerned that she does not have a specific teaching subject. In the long term she would prefer a full-time commitment but expresses dismay about her career development.

8.2.1 B8: It just occurred to me the other day that I might never have a proper job again. I mean all the jobs are to cover this, to cover that, temporary for one term . .

She explains that she is not looking to move elsewhere, and that something more permanent at this school would suit her.

8.3.1 B8: I would just like to feel I would, one day, in the next say, two to three years, have a permanent job that would always be there, and I could develop it rather than having to sort of negotiate, year, or term by term, what I was going to do.

B8 explains that not having a permanent teaching room is a major problem.

When asked about the English and Mathematics teaching that she had done, B8 says that although she had quite liked this work, she had experienced a poor start in English, with a set book which the pupils did not like.

The conversation reverts to CPVE and the possibility of this new course being a success. They refer to the return of a teacher currently on secondment who B8 is, in part, replacing. A8 explains that since this person has not undergone CPVE training, B8's best

hope of continued employment is to further develop CPVE expertise. A8 goes on to compliment B8 on her versatility in terms of teaching areas, and he suggests that she does some word processing. A8 expresses a desire to offer B8 a permanent position within the faculty if it was possible, and compliments her on a caring approach to pupils.

A8 recaps on the two major problem areas already identified and asks if he can help with these.

8.4.1 A8: Is there anything I can do about the problems that you've mentioned. There are two really, aren't there - we've talked about the control, the discipline thing...

8.4.2 B8: Yes.

8.4.3 A8: .... and the other one is to do with the organisation of the department.

8.4.4 B8: Yes, well I think on the discipline thing, um, well, I don't know how you can help really - but I'm going to be better next year. I've already decided that - there's going to be a new approach.

A8 expounds the view that good discipline in the long term results from the class teacher's own ability and they refer again to making lessons more enjoyable. A8 also believes that B8 does not have any serious discipline problems and that she sets herself very high standards.

They revisit the problem of the department head and agree that there is no "magical solution" to this colleague's incompetence. B8 asks about the current situation with regard to running school visits.

They highlight the fact that a new member of staff for September, who is also teaching commerce for the first time, and who is a good

friend of B8, would benefit from some help and support from B8.

B8 asks for some hints on mixed ability teaching for examination classes. A8 replies by suggesting that one merely applies the techniques one would use lower down the school. Although he includes one or two practical suggestions, the discussion about mixed ability grouping is fairly abstract in nature.

At this point in the interview it appears that it is coming to a natural conclusion when B8 asks what the next step is in the procedure. A8 explains what will happen to the written report of the interview, and B8 expresses concern that she may appear disloyal to J. A8 reassures B8 and J. is discussed at some length once again, with both participants making reference to coping strategies.

CPVE also surfaces and B8 briefly explains the structure of this course, the use of course guidelines, the effectiveness of training, and the projected life of this initiative.

They refer to the disadvantages of being part-time, and the problem of B8 having to move classrooms so frequently. A8 looks at the timetable for next year and lists the rooms that B8 will be using. B8 expresses a wish for wall space to display commerce work. A8 draws the interview to a close.

This was a fairly long interview, dominated by six topics that were re-visited, often on more than one occasion.



1. Class control/discipline
2. Teaching methods
3. J.
4. CPVE
5. Mixed ability groups
6. B8's prospects for continued employment

The relationship of these six topics to the content/time categories in figure 5.8.2 is as follows:

"Class control/discipline" and "Teaching methods" is classified as TEACHING (13 minutes). "J" is categorised as OTHER STAFF (11.5 minutes). "CPVE" and "mixed ability groups" relates mainly to "CURRICULUM" (15.5 minutes). "B8's prospects for continued employment" would fall under CAREER DEVELOPMENT (4.5 minutes).

Thus, four content/time categories dominate this interview and account for 44.5 minutes or 67% of the time.

Figure 5.8.1 indicates that most of the topics were at the INDIVIDUAL level. However, the discussion of mixed ability teaching was at times both philosophical, related to faculty policy, and expressed as a very personal view. Similarly, CPVE is difficult to classify since, as a whole school curriculum initiative, it was alluded to at different levels.

Perhaps the most significant content item in this interview concerns B8's incompetent head of department. On the proforma, under the heading "Dissatisfactions", B8 had written: "Departmental organisation of teaching materials , speakers, etc", and under the heading, "Help and Support Sought" she had written: "Reliable



Figure 5.8.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 8

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

Class control.

Teaching methods.

The effect of being new.

Next year's timetable.

B8's lack of an established teaching subject.

Career/employment prospects.

Compliments from A8.

No permanent teaching room.

Review of English teaching.

Mixed ability teaching.

CPVE.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

Organisational problems.

Incompetence of head of department.

GCSE syllabus.

Exam results.

How B8 can help a new member of staff.

Mixed ability teaching.

CPVE.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

The appraisal process.

Mixed ability teaching.

CPVE.

Figure 5.8.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 8

Job Satisfaction	2
Job Dissatisfaction	2
Praise	3.5
Teaching	13
Plans/Targets	3.5
UNSET	1
Career Development	4.5
Other Staff	11.5
Management & Admin.	3.5
Curriculum	15.5
Resources	1.5
Whole School Issues	2
Individual Pupils	0
Classes	0.5
Other	2
Total	66 minutes

departmental back-up". The impact of the head of department's ineffectiveness was first brought up after B8's complaint about the booking of visiting speakers, loaned videos, and unusable worksheets.

8.5.1 A8: What do you think we can do to solve that sort of problem?

8.5.2 B8: I don't know really. I feel disloyal now...

8.5.3 A8: No, no,...

8.5.4 B8: .... but I feel that I have to mention it.

8.5.5 A8: Of course. I mean, it doesn't come as a surprise, I can assure you. I think what you've got to do is - this is what I do anyway - you have to just do it yourself. If you want to order a video ...

8.5.6 B8: I'd come to that conclusion - and I can do that, can I?

8.5.7 A8: Oh yes! Just write off or whatever or to whoever's providing it, order it, and, um, you've just got to operate in parallel with J. and ignore what she's doing. That's the only thing you can do.

A8 clearly identifies very well with the problem, although one may question whether he should have confided the following, particularly since the implied suggestion is that B8 should respond to J. in a similar fashion. (8.6.3)

8.6.1 A8: Obviously she feels she has to do that sort of work.

8.6.2 B8: That's right, yeah.

8.6.3 A8: But you've just got to ignore it.

8.6.4 B8: O.K.

8.6.5 A8: I mean, I know it sounds cruel, but if you didn't, you'd go crazy.

8.6.6 B8: Yes (laughter)

8.6.7 A8: I must get memos on everything and, to be perfectly

honest, most of it has to go into the dustbin. I haven't got the heart to say, "What are you doing and why are you bothering with it?", because she thinks that's the only way she can ....

8.6.8 B8: Her energy is just going in the wrong direction. She's working very hard.

8.6.9 A8: I know, I know she is, yeah.

B8's concern about appearing disloyal emerges again towards the end of the interview after A8 has explained what happens to the written report.

8.7.1 B8: And the bits, the sort of departmental bits. I feel a bit, you know, disloyal and I know it's a problem everybody knows about, but I don't know how happy I am that it's ... I don't want it to go against her.

8.7.2 A8: Oh no, no. I won't specifically mention that individual, although everybody will know what the problem is.

8.7.3 B8: Yes, yes.

8.7.4 A8: But that's one of those problems which it's very difficult to do anything about.

8.7.5 B8: Yes, right.

8.7.6 A8: But, um, you know what the situation is with J. - it's no secret really. She keeps talking about retiring but I don't know whether she's going to get round to it.

8.7.7 B8: I think she's going to wait and see what happens - with the school and so on - that's the impression I get.

8.7.8 A8: She changes her mind a lot actually. She said to me earlier in the year that she would be retiring this year.

8.7.9 B8: Oh really. I think she needs the pension.

Clearly this content item is problematic. J. is a major obstacle to B8's effectiveness as a teacher, and in this sense there can be no doubt that it is relevant. On the other hand, both participants recognise that the discussion of a third person is a very delicate matter. B8 is the more reticent of the two, and aware that she may be getting J. into trouble. A8 uses this topic to share some of his



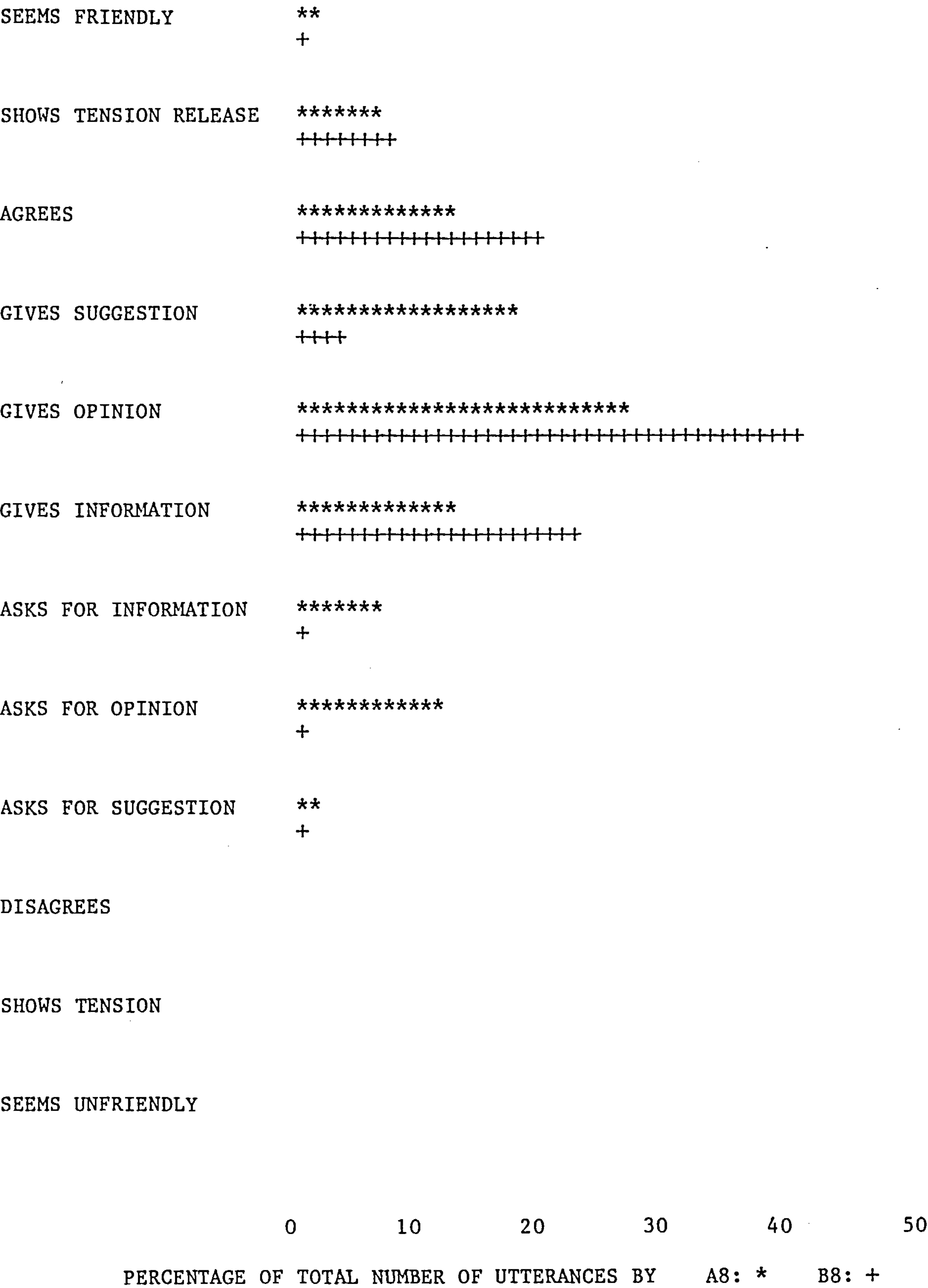
own despair about J.'s behaviour, and also in the hope that B8 may talk more frankly about her department head. B8's loyalty to her department head has the effect of curbing a more severe verbal onslaught from A8 - a situation where one might have thought the roles would have been reversed.

This interview certainly looked back over the previous year's work and it looked forward a great deal too, especially with regard to the CPVE work that B8 would be embarking upon.

### Process Analysis

This interview is different - perhaps even atypical - in a number of respects. A8 spoke for most of the time - 61% - as opposed to 39% for B8. In all the other interviews, (except number 11), it was the appraisee who spoke most. Similarly, in the other interviews, the appraisee had the longest mean utterance length, but in this interview it was 8 seconds for the appraisee and 13 seconds for the appraiser. Some of the reasons for these differences will emerge in later discussion. The verbal category profile (figure 5.8.3) illustrates some of the unusual features of this interview. It is commonplace to find that the appraisee spends most of the time 'giving opinions' and 'information'. However, a very high proportion (20%) of utterances are in the 'agrees' category and furthermore, in none of the other interviews does the appraisee 'agree' more than the appraiser. A8 spends most of the time giving 'attempted answers' and a relatively small proportion (20%) of utterances are concerned with asking 'questions'. More significant is the proportion of A8's utterances (18%) concerned with 'giving

Figure 5.8.3 VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 8



suggestions' - indicating a much greater preponderance with supplying solutions than B8. Whilst the absence of 'negative emotional' utterances is not exceptional, it appears from the 'positive emotional' categories that it is the appraisee who is more concerned with the emotional stability of this interview.

The explanation for these features lies in an examination of the roles that are being played out in this interview.

This can be better understood by describing these roles not in terms of appraiser/appraisee but rather as "teacher/pupil". In addition, A8's dominance, and B8's dependency, give the interview the flavour of a selection interview, particularly when A8 asks fairly direct and often abstract questions. For example, B8 is quizzed about the value of notetaking, or, as illustrated in the extract below, about what she would recommend in a hypothetical teaching situation. A8's objective could be to get B8 to "think" more deeply about pedagogic matters, but she responds in a non-committal way, almost as if she is searching for the answer that will please A8.

8.8.1 A8: If there were no syllabus constraint at all - there were no exams, you didn't feel that you had to engage in certain activities; what would you do in those ideal circumstances that you think would improve the teaching?

8.8.2 B8: Well, I suppose a lot more activity based learning if you like. I don't know quite how that would be managed, I mean, again this year, because of the action, I haven't been able to use the video and that sort of thing, and I think that's essential. There's a lot of areas that I would miss out, and expand on others. There are areas that I think are relevant to their lives that they could maybe get something out of. But you would need to be able to visit, you would need to have more speakers in, and let them get on with it in their own time.

A8 does try to get B8 to self probe, but as the example below



indicates (8.9.4), B8 is seeking advice and help from A8. This extract also shows that B8 has a very strong tendency to agree with A8, or this may simply be a form of "imitation".

8.9.1 A8: You think you're not getting enough out of them?

8.9.2 B8: Yes.

8.9.3 A8: They should be performing better than they are?

8.9.4 B8: Yes, and I'm not quite sure how to get it. But there are discipline problems as well sometimes, but that seems to vary.

8.9.5 A8: What sort of discipline problems? Is it, when you're talking, they're not listening ....

8.9.6 B8: When I'm talking they're not listening, yes, I find that sometimes a problem.

8.9.7 A8: You mean be quiet, or listening?

8.9.8 B8: Well, I think ...

8.9.9 A8: There's a difference, isn't there?

8.9.10 B8: Yes, there is a difference and I think things have improved. They're now quiet - but I don't feel they're listening.

8.9.11 A8: Yeah, I know what you mean. They're just sort of staring, doodling ....

8.9.12 B8: Staring into space, doodling, and looking around, and I can tell that they're not listening. I might as well be talking into a void. It's the same old problem: silence is easy to obtain, chaos obviously comes of its own, but lively discussion, interested participation, that's what doesn't work.

One of the reasons why A8 spent much more time talking than B8 is because he referred to his own experiences a great deal. One could argue that he simply likes the sound of his own voice, but these anecdotal contributions are rarely irrelevant to the discussion. In the following example, the reminiscence is really the preamble to a question about the teaching of commerce.



8.10.1 A8: I find myself getting into this with the fifth years - a kind of routine of bookwork and notetaking and teacher explanation - all the time - you get teacher explanation followed by bookwork. Next lesson: a bit of teacher explanation followed by bookwork. And they get fed up with it, and it gets boring. You've got to break into it every now and again, haven't you?

8.10.2 B8: Yes, but how?

8.10.3 A8: Well, over the last couple of weeks with my fourth years, they've gone out in school time, just for a morning - but there were no problems about cover. I was able to get them to do a fieldwork activity, which was better. We spent about two or three weeks on it, analysing it. Sticking in the odd role play exercise ....

8.10.4 B8: Yes.

8.10.5 A8: I stuck in a role play exercise earlier in the year called the "Farming Game". I'm not totally convinced it necessarily covers a key idea in the syllabus but I thought, "What the heck - let's have a bit of fun for a change". The thing I was wondering was whether in fact one could do that with commerce, providing one feels one's got the time obviously?

A8's last sentence of 8.10.1 is really a cue for B8 to offer a solution. B8's response is rather like the reply a pupil might give, and, like an obliging teacher, A8 provides the answer.

Thus one of the key features of this interview is that B8 is not really self-appraising - rather it is A8 who is doing it for her. B8 is passive and unassertive, and I would suggest - especially since she is a newcomer - that she is unaware of the self-appraisal emphasis at the school that, incidentally, has been very evident from the other interviews. She believes that the interview is an opportunity for her to hear what her "boss" thinks about her. Yet the Interview Analysis Form (figure 5.8.4) indicates that the interview was totally satisfactory from her point of view. This must be partly due to the fact that A8's comments about her are positive and complimentary, as the example below illustrates.

Figure 5.8.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A8

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 ~~X~~ 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) To see J. with regard to letting her staff work more independently.
- b) Buy more commerce texts.

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B8

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

- a) Work on class control, using more interesting teaching methods.
- b) Possible observation visits to other teachers' lessons.
- c) Take responsibility for organising my own work within the department.

8.11.1 A8: I'd like to think, if the school stays open, that we can use you. I mean, I'm certainly, I'd be quite happy for you to have a job in this faculty ....

8.11.2 B8: Thank you.

8.11.3 A8: .... if there was one available, no problem at all. As I said to you before, I'd like you to do as much as you can. And I've been very impressed and happy with the work you've done this year. Because the kids, I think, seem to like you.

8.11.4 B8: Even when you hear me shouting! (laughter)

8.11.5 A8: Well, everybody has to do that now and again. But you've got a very caring approach to the kids, I think. I think you're doing fine. I do hope that we can find something that's going to be more satisfactory for you on a long term basis.

### General Conclusions

The content of this interview is reasonably wide-ranging. It included discussion of B8's teaching - both in the previous year and the year ahead - and B8's career prospects. A number of issues were dealt with in considerable detail. Discussion of B8's ineffective head of department represented a delicate area. There were frank exchanges of viewpoint on this, particularly from A8, whilst B8 was concerned that she would appear disloyal.

Although it is different, there is no doubt that this interview is an appraisal encounter. In fact, it may correspond to the kind of approach adopted in the commercial world where appraisers make judgements, the information is predominantly top-down, and appraisees listen rather than speak.

Despite certain incongruities in the interview, the Interview Analysis Forms (figure 5.8.4) indicate a large measure of success.



Both participants were very satisfied with the other person's response, and hence it would seem that the role relationship suited them both. Although A8 recognised that he had talked too much, B8 seemed satisfied. This suggests that A8 was aware that the balance of the conversation was wrong. Furthermore, he was using questions with the hope that these would elicit more self-analysis from B8. Unfortunately, B8 did not play the self-appraisal role, with the effect of creating a role relationship that led to some of the atypical verbal behaviour that has been identified. With hindsight, A8 should have made sure that B8 understood the self-appraisal emphasis before the interview took place.

A8 referred to his own experiences in an attempt to inspire B8 to talk more, and also to avoid prolonged silences. B8's affiliative behaviour, particularly in response to A8's opinions, could be from deference, respect, or simply coincidence of viewpoint.

In the light of B8's employment status, and the fact that she is new to the school, it is, perhaps, not surprising that her behaviour in this interview can be likened, metaphorically, to that of the obliging and compliant pupil, who is quite happy to have received her "red tick" of approval.



## INTERVIEW 9

A9 is the Head of the Science Faculty and he is interviewing B9 who is Head of the Biology Department. B9 has also been in charge of lower school integrated science on a voluntary basis. This year, his department has been staffed by two part-time temporary teachers. The school had been under threat of closure but had recently been reprieved. The interview lasted for 17 minutes.

### Content Analysis

A9 begins the interview by referring to B9's written comment on the proforma about 'A' level results, assuming it was anticipating good results in the summer. B9 explained that he was talking about last year's results. When asked about the likely results for this year, B9 predicted that they would be disappointing, because the pupils in the group had been difficult to motivate, and they had not put in enough work. A9 pointed out that this year's CSE results were rather poor. B9 admits that he cannot understand why many pupils did worse in the real examination than they did in the mock examination. A9 wonders whether the poor performance could be due to lack of preparation or revision guidance or lack of motivation. They discuss these issues briefly, and also B9's projections for the 'O' level pupils.

A9 asks about how the two part-time staff have worked together. B9 claims that it has created extra work, and sometimes confusion, for him, mainly on the organisational side. They conclude that the pupils have not suffered to any great extent.

A9 refers to the "Dissatisfactions" and "Frustrations" headings on the proforma, which B9 has left blank, and invites any comments under those sections - but without really giving B9 the opportunity to interject.

9.1.1 A9: You haven't, uh, mentioned any dissatisfactions or frustrations. Unless you've got anything you want to put in there, we'll move on to 'The Year Ahead'.

A9 clarifies that B9 may be attending an in-service training course for department heads, and asks about a first/second year science course. On the form B9 was not referring to an in-service training course, but the school's own first/second year science course. A9 says that they will get some time to look at that in the following week.

When asked whether he is prepared to continue taking responsibility for first/second year science B9 agrees, and refers to the fact that although he will not be teaching it, this may be an advantage.

A9 wonders how B9 feels about how his department will progress. B9 outlines the effect that falling rolls will have and the conversation moves on to a discussion about integrated science in the upper school. A9 brings the talk back to the future of biology, and B9 re-iterates the effect that small numbers will have on separate science study.

After mentioning B9's written remark about his dislike of a first year class, A9 asks whether B9 feels he has been able to help departmental staff who may have been having class control

difficulties. B9 explains that he has helped when asked, and that his staff have requested assistance.

The discussion moves on to the wider role taken by B9 in the faculty. B9 expresses an interest in keeping the records of the faculty, and he outlines, with examples, the advantages of accurate record keeping on pupil performance. In this context he alludes to the introduction of pupil profiling. A9 concurs with this suggestion and feels that it would be useful and important. They agree to look at an example of a record sheet brought in by another member of the faculty.

A9 summarises B9's responsibilities next year and the question of pay arises:

9.2.1 A9: So, taking into account the fact that you're in charge of biology, you're voluntarily looking after first and second year science, and you're interested in record keeping, my next question is probably superfluous in that I was going to ask you if you feel that you've got sufficient responsibility within the faculty.

9.2.2 B9: I've got enough - but not enough pay!

9.2.3 A9: Yeah, um, well, there's not a lot I can do about that except try and push when we do actually know that the boss is going to end up with Responsibility Allowances.

9.2.4 B9: Which starts when?

9.2.5 A9: October.

9.2.6 B9: October.

9.2.7 A9: You should be at the top of the pile for any that come. Certainly I'll have a word with him about that.

They discuss the heavy workload of next year's timetable but B9 is happy with the continuity of classes and the large proportion of sixth form work. They both regret that B9 is unable to teach in the



third year (year 9). They discuss briefly the effectiveness of one of the part-time members of staff, and they agree that she has done a fine job.

A9 asks about long term plans and B9 admits to being tied to the area and that job opportunities are scarce. A9 recounts the fact that the management course B9 is hoping to follow had been very successful in helping other people to get Head of Science positions. A9 brings the interview to a close.

This was a very short interview which covered a limited range of topics, and very briefly. In fact, some were skimmed over with only the most cursory treatment. For example, the following extract begins with a very open, and potentially wide-ranging, question about the future of biology, and the department in general:

9.3.1 A9: Now that the school is going to stay open, do you see the department progressing in any particular way? Do you anticipate any future changes or ....

9.3.2 B9: The numbers at the moment are healthy, but obviously they're going to take a drastic nosedive in two or three years time, and I think - the way things are going - that might well be the time that perhaps integrated science gets introduced. Awkward, isn't it?

9.3.3 A9: Yeah, well I think we've got to look towards ....

9.3.4 B9: I think that's where it's going to go. If we don't go that way ourselves, Baker's going to push us into integrated science anyway. It might well be an opportune time to actually think: Well perhaps this is the time to introduce it on a more wide scale. And then just have single sciences for your very able - the very top able groups.

9.3.5 A9: Yeah, well maybe that's another thing you're going to have to look at. If we produce a good argument for having integrated science, then really it's a good argument for everybody doing integrated science. Although we may be able to, with the very able, perhaps do three sciences in two periods or something. So far as biology is concerned, you feel that it's inevitable perhaps that, as a subject, up to fifth



year level anyway, biology is going to probably disappear in its own right?

9.3.6 B9: I think it will, purely and simply because of the numbers situation in the school.

9.3.7 A9: Yeah.

9.3.8 B9: You've got 61 in the first year next year. I think when they come through to the fourth year ....

9.3.9 A9: Yeah.

9.3.10 B9: Next year's numbers will build up obviously, but you're still not going to be up at 120. You're still going to be fairly low so you're going to have low numbers coming through. It'll just make specialist science non-viable. I think that's basically the problem. If we had bigger numbers now, there's no need - it's just a numbers game that we're playing.

9.3.11 A9: Right.

The use of the word "progressing" (9.3.1) in A9's initial question in the context of a school that has been saved from closure, suggests that A9 was hoping for a more enthusiastic response. B9's analysis may be a very realistic prediction but the lack of optimism and somewhat fatalistic approach to the question typifies the melancholy that was characteristic of much of the interview. One is left with the feeling that there is much more that could be said; for example, about the future of the department, biology's role in the curriculum, and pedagogic aspects. The restriction of content is due partly to B9's fairly narrow interpretation of questions raised, and A9's reluctance to pursue issues. It is also a function of their transactional relationship - something to be looked at further in the 'process' analysis.

The content classification table (figure 5.9.1), and content/time analysis (figure 5.9.2), is further evidence of an interview that was rather superficial in its content coverage. As a department

Figure 5.9.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 9

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

Proposed INSET course.

B9's timetable next year.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

Examination results.

Integrated science in lower school.

Support for staff.

Integrated science in upper school.

Effect of falling rolls on biology numbers.

B9's responsibilities in faculty, especially record-keeping.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

Responsibility Allowances.

Figure 5.9.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 9

Job Satisfaction	0
Job Dissatisfaction	0
Praise	0
Teaching	0
Plans/Targets	3
UNSET	1
Career Development	1
Other Staff	1.5
Management & Admin.	4.5
Curriculum	2
Resources	0
Whole School Issues	0.5
Individual Pupils	0
Classes	3.5
Other	0
Total	17 minutes

head, it is understandable to find most of the topics falling into the DEPT/FACULTY category - the same was true for B6. However, there were only three items outside this category, and in each case the discussion lasted for a very short time. Most noticeable, is the lack of discussion about B9 himself - his relationships with individuals, laboratory assistance, practical work, field-work, teaching style, and performance in general, for example, are not mentioned at all. Only four of the content/time categories (figure 5.9.2) had conversation lasting for more than one minute, and seven were not alluded to at all. There may be at least three reasons for this. Firstly, the proforma was used systematically as a guide throughout the interview, and there was nothing on it to prompt such discussion. Secondly, A9 did not feel that he could go far beyond the items listed on the form by B9. Thirdly, B9 was not disposed to raise new topics or talk freely about himself in an introspective manner.

The use of the proforma gave this interview a clearly identifiable structure in that participants were able to proceed speedily and mechanically from one item to the next, in the same order as on the form. Each topic was dealt with discretely, and the only discussion point that was re-visited was the part-time staff. This may be regarded as a very efficient way of managing the interview - almost as though it was a business meeting with the proforma acting as a formal agenda, and with haste as the prime virtue. Of note also, is the fact that this interview did not contain any kind of identifiable introduction or conclusion. A9 started immediately with the question of examination results without any preamble or informal conversation that has been characteristic of the other



interviews. The interview ending was just as sudden, without really giving B9 a final opportunity to make further comments:

9.4.1 A9: Right. O.K. Unless you've got anything else, that's it, thankyou.

In so far as the proforma is designed to allow a look back over the previous year and a look ahead to the next, the interview was successful in achieving this objective.

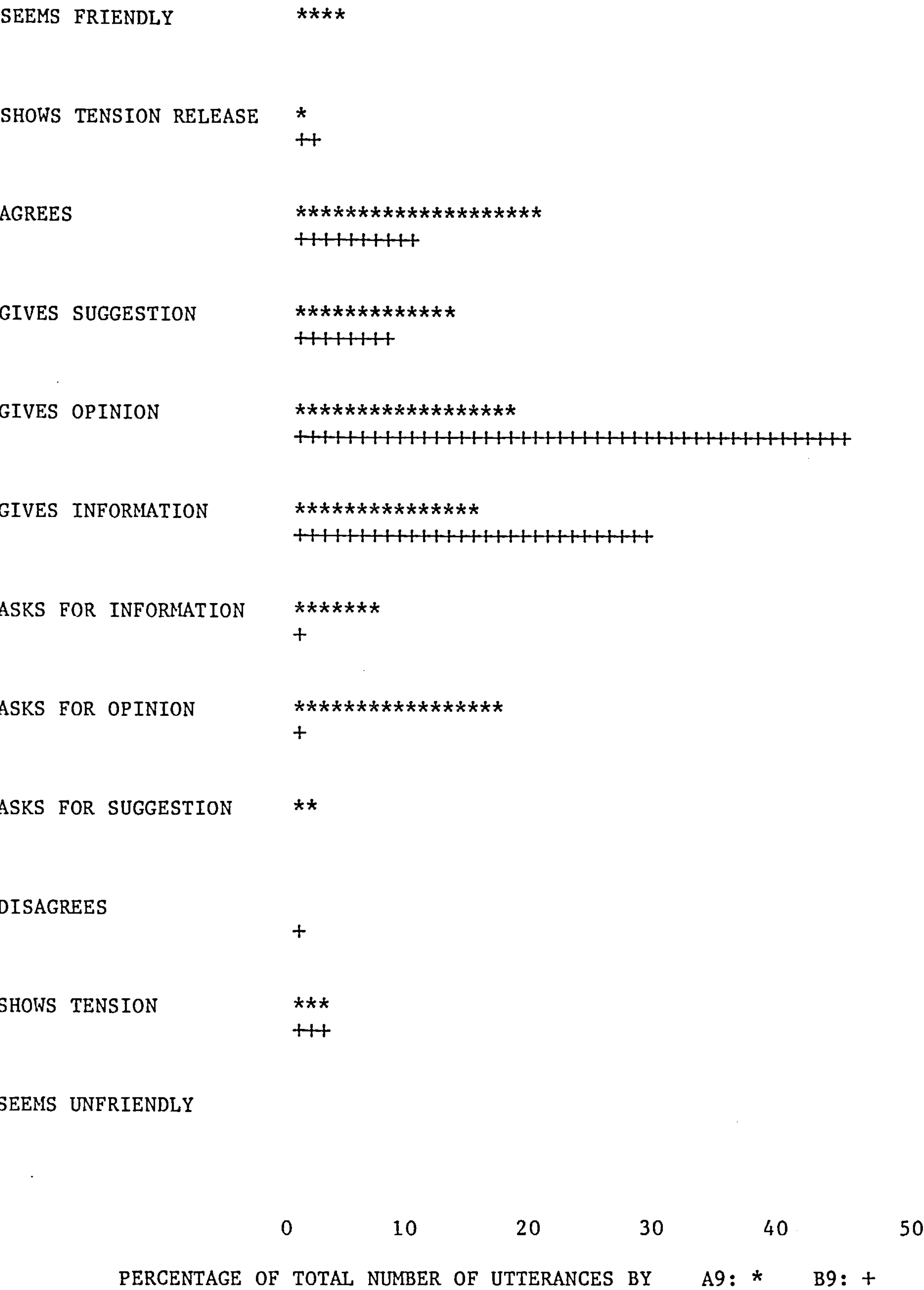
In such a short interview it is very easy to suggest a list of items that could have been discussed. However, there is no prescribed length for an interview and it can be argued that the participants themselves are the best judges of what should be included.

Nevertheless, one content item that is conspicuous by its absence is in the area of praise for the appraisee. Apart from suggesting that B9 should be at the top of the list for a Responsibility Allowance, on no other occasion did A9 display recognition, or congratulate B9 on the work he had done.

#### Process Analysis

Much of the quantitative data on this interview illustrates some fairly typical characteristics. B9 spoke for most of the time (A9=41% B9=59%), and his mean utterance length was greater (A9=11 secs. B9=15 secs). A9's questions were often prefaced with a piece of factual information, which had the beneficial effect of preparing the appraisee and "softening" the question. As can be seen from the profile (figure 5.9.3), 15% of A9's utterances were concerned with 'giving information' - a relatively high figure. The sharing of

Figure 5.9.3 VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 9



'information' was a distinctive feature of this interview (29% for B9), and is indicative of the reluctance on both parts - but particularly B9 - to convey thoughts and feelings. B9 tended to combine facts with opinions - or present opinions as facts - in his answers, which made it difficult for A9 to present an alternative viewpoint, or develop an idea without appearing to contradict. Undoubtedly, B9's manner of interaction in this respect accounts to a large extent for the brevity in this interview. The appraisee had a tendency to interrupt, with answers that were terse or dismissive or definitive. In these circumstances, the appraiser cannot easily extend or deepen the conversation without threatening the emotional stability of the interview.

The percentage of 'positive emotional' utterances (A9=25% B9=12%) compares favourably with the other interviews, although most of these were in the 'agrees' category, and consisted mainly of "Yeah" and "Right". Furthermore, much agreement took place in response to information giving. One is naturally more likely to agree with a fact than an opinion, and as a result, the emotional "force" of these positive reactions is reduced. B3 and B9 are the only appraisees not to have a single remark classified as 'seems friendly'.

As mentioned earlier, there was very little evidence of praise from A9, even though there were a number of opportunities for this. For example, at the beginning of the interview, after the confusion about whether B9 had referred to last year's or this year's 'A' level results, A9 could have complimented B9 on securing a set of grades that were indisputably very good indeed. Instead, the

interview was very negative, with B9 making great use of defence mechanisms, as the discussion on examination results illustrates:

9.5.1 A9: How about this year's then?

9.5.2 B9: This year's I think will be disappointing.

(There followed an uneasy silence before they spoke simultaneously, although it was B9 who carried on. Non-verbal messages would be illuminating here.)

9.5.3 A9: Is there ....

9.5.4 B9: It's a feeling I've had almost from the beginning of the course. It's something I've been saying to E. and it's something that J. had been saying when she was teaching them - and C. - that they just haven't done any work. They've been very difficult to motivate.

9.5.5 A9: The chemistry of the group wasn't very good ....

9.5.6 B9: Basically, yes.

A9 went on to comment on the poor CSE results. Thus, a rather depressing tone was established at the outset, and it persisted throughout the remainder of the conversation. This illustrates the importance of setting the right atmosphere at the beginning of an appraisal interview. If A9 had been able to begin the interview on a positive note, with praise or admiration as his opening message to B9, one wonders what effect this might have had on the appraisee's later responses.

Nevertheless, A9 was clearly aware of his responsibility to control and direct the interview, and he made some catalytic attempts to promote self-appraisal from B9. For example, in one part of the interview A9 cleverly makes use of questions which aim to probe more deeply, and are made more incisive by the implied criticism.

9.6.1 A9: Was there any sort of lack of preparation, do you



think, either on their part, or in the revision scheme or whatever, that they were following - that might need looking at another time?

This example is not likely to alienate the appraisee, and yet it contains very subtle indications that the teacher may be able to do something which will improve examination results. The phrase, "... either on their part, or in the revision scheme or whatever", can be interpreted to mean, "There was lack of preparation on your part." However, if it had been put in this way, at the very best, it would have provoked a defensive reaction. Similarly, the phrase, ".... that might need looking at another time", is much more acceptable than a direct instruction to do something about a problem. Thus the result of very skilful questioning on the part of A9 is to produce a more positive response from B9.

9.7.1 B9: I think I will look at what we do over the last couple of months. Perhaps take the emphasis off doing 'questions' and perhaps going on to 'topics' as revision, rather than perhaps just having questions.

9.7.2 A9: Right.

9.7.3 B9: I think that's something that's go to vary with the group as well. You've got to look and decide if the group is going to be the ones that will benefit from questions or benefit from revising certain topics.

9.7.4 A9: Yeah, yeah.

There are two very important outcomes from an exchange of this kind. Firstly, the appraiser has been able to show that both he and the appraisee should be interested in exploring why the examination results were somewhat mediocre. Secondly, the appraisee has been led to the belief that he ought to be prepared to do something about this, and he consequently suggested a change in strategy. The conversation continues as follows.

9.8.1 B9: I just haven't been able to work out why, this year.

9.8.2 A9: But it could be, well it could even be the motivation of the ...

9.8.3 B9: (interrupting) It could be the motivation of the group. If you in fact look at the kids who haven't done particularly well, they're the type of children you wouldn't expect to do particularly well anyway.

9.8.4 A9: Yeah, yeah. But certainly I think it is probably worth looking at, maybe, with the better ones, maybe the way that the revision went.

9.8.5 B9: Um, I think that's a ....

9.8.6 A9: How about the 'O' level?

In this extract, A9 is sensitive to B9's despairing remark, (9.8.1), and provides emotional support by suggesting that the pupils lack motivation (9.8.2). B9 seizes the opportunity to escape and shift the blame to the pupils rather than himself - something that A9 effectively counters by returning to the issue of appropriate revision techniques (9.8.4).

Throughout the entire interview, A9 is conscious that his questions need to be very carefully worded if he is to avoid an abrasive reaction.

9.9.1 A9: Some groups can obviously cause some people problems. Do you feel that you've been able to help and support the people working in your department and around you with the problems that they've been having - if they've been having problems?

9.9.2 B9: I've helped - when asked by other staff.

9.9.3 A9: So you feel that you're happy to support ....

9.9.4 B9: Happy to support, yeah. But once again, you get the strange thing of the profession where, unless you're asked to actually help, you find it very difficult to go into a class unless it's a total and utter riot, because you feel you're

treading on other people's feet, and they're going to get upset by it. It's very difficult. It's a very grey area. When do you go into the classroom and when don't you go into the classroom? So what I tend to do is to see people afterwards who I've seen have been causing trouble and spoken to them privately afterwards.

9.9.5 A9: Yeah, yeah. You don't feel in your position as a Head of Department that if something is going wrong in the classroom next door - even if somebody doesn't come in to ask you - that you can't, you don't feel able to just walk in and ....

9.9.6 B9: Yes, if it was total and utter chaos, yes, then. Because you get to the point where something has to be done and you go and do it, obviously.

9.9.7 A9: And do the people that work with you feel confident to come and ask you for help? Are they doing that?

9.9.8 B9: Well they have been coming and asking for help.

9.9.9 A9: Yeah, yeah, when they've felt it necessary ....

9.9.10 B9: ..... when they've felt it necessary.

This extract exemplifies a tension between A9 and B9. Pauses and interruptions are symptomatic of this, in addition to the evidence of the actual words used. A9's opening question (9.9.1) of this section is interpreted by B9 to mean that he hasn't been offering the right level of support. His reply (9.9.2) is rather tart, and A9 responds (9.9.3) with a comment primarily designed to restore the emotional balance. B9 goes on to justify the stance he has taken by reference to a criterion he argues is used by the profession as a whole. In most other instances in this interview A9 would have given up at this point and moved on to a new topic, but to his credit he persists with a suggestion (9.9.5) that a department head may feel it necessary to intervene even without being asked. B9 gives qualified assentiveness (9.9.6). A9's next question (9.9.7) is critical because it alludes to the relationship that B9 has with his staff. A9 accepted the reply or perhaps he felt that he had got as far as he could without jeopardising the stability of the



interview. Nevertheless, I suspect that he would have liked B9 to respond openly, frankly, and at length on this most delicate of issues. However, A9 was aware of the build up of tension and the potentially explosive possibility of probing B9 any further, so he brought this topic to an abrupt and rather unnatural close.

The Interview Analysis Forms (figure 5.9.4) indicate a very satisfactory interview over all, and this may be true given that they provide information primarily about the appraiser, and on the assumption that the participants have fairly limited expectations of what can be achieved in an appraisal interview. Both believe that A9 talked too much and A9 appears to have reservations about his own performance - his answer to question 3 suggests that he was only just satisfied with it. This may be because he feels that he has not been able to induce from B9 a response that can in any way be described - if somewhat ideally - as vibrant, constructive, frank, and committed.

B9 has certainly not used the encounter to confess inner feelings or run the risk of exposing weaknesses. He may simply not have much faith in the system. Whilst A9 was in formal control of the structure and progression of the interview, it was the "type" of communication engaged in by B9 that dominated the tone, and gave the interview its flavour, as well as affecting the social relationship of the two participants. In essence, B9's remarks were more about metacommunication, (communication about communication), than the communication itself. The effect of this was to establish a boundary towards the left hand side of the continuum shown below.



Figure 5.9.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A9

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B9

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 ~~X~~ 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 ~~X~~ 6 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

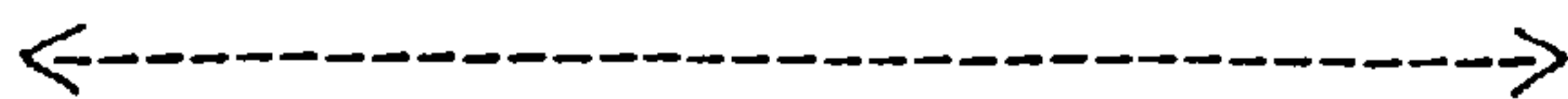
Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems



A9's attempts to penetrate this boundary were thwarted by reticence and hesitation from B9. The evidence provided by lack of speech synchronisation (i.e. silences and interruptions), indicates also that the dominant objective of this interview was B9's concern to prevent trespass.

#### General Conclusions

This was not a particularly successful interview. It was short, with restricted coverage, and dealt with most topics cursorily. Some departmental matters were considered, but there was negligible discussion of the appraisee as an individual, either in his role as a classroom teacher or as a manager. The proforma, itself containing limited information, was used to determine the content of the interview, and led to misunderstanding on two occasions. There was little genuine warmth or humour. Although A9 did try to get B9 to reflect upon his own performance with skilful questioning, he could have been more persistent and made much greater use of praise. The over-riding influence however, was the appraisee's attitude to the situation of the interview. He adopted a detached and impersonal stance, preferring to focus upon external, extraneous and situational forces, rather than himself. The emphasis on information giving and the absence of topics classified at the 'INDIVIDUAL' level are indicative of this.

This was not a self-appraisal interview of any depth. The encounter

was superficial because:

- a) The appraisee did not have the inclination to look honestly at his own performance.
- b) The appraiser was unable or unwilling to generate the motivation for B9 to do so.
- c) Neither were prepared to invest the necessary time and energy.

## INTERVIEW 10

A10 is a Deputy Head, recently arrived at the study school, who is conducting his first appraisal interview. B10 is the 'acting' Head of the Mathematics Faculty who has been covering a one year period of secondment for a teacher who is referred to as E. B10 is normally the Assistant Head of Maths - thus this is her first appraisal in the role of faculty head. The interview lasted for 32 minutes.

### Content Analysis

A10 begins the interview by stating that he has read through the proforma and written in some questions to help take them through it. He makes reference also to the fact that it is his first appraisal interview, and that he wanted to do justice to what B10 had written.

After reading out what she has written under the "Successes" heading, he asks B10 to expand upon how she feels she has been able to hold the faculty together. B10 mentions the good personal relations she has with faculty staff, and that they have been "protective" towards her. She recognises the criticism that the Maths faculty is regarded as "insular", but feels that this helps the staff to work together well. A10 pauses for 30 seconds to write down what B10 has been saying.

A10 expresses confusion about interpreting the headings on the form, and wonders whether "Successes" and "Satisfactions" represents a



gradation. He picks up organising the administration of the faculty, and B10 admits that one can always do better. She goes on to emphasise that this year has been a tremendous learning experience for her. She feels satisfied that she has been able to deal with some "problem pupils" by talking to them on a one-to-one basis. A10 takes them on to the "Problems" section of the form.

10.1.1 A10: Right, in the "Problems" where you've said you felt like a "stand-in", what I'm really interested to know is, what gave you those feelings and do you think there's any way you might have actually overcome them?

10.1.2 B10: I think it's more personal than from outside. (Pause) I don't quite see how I could, because I knew at the beginning that this was for a year, so I was always aware that major changes I made ought to suit E. And he's been very good. He's stepped out of the picture totally. So ...

10.1.3 A10: It's a personal thing. You weren't made to feel like a stand-in by people in the school...

10.1.4 B10: No. I can't think of any instance where somebody's come along and said, "No". I've been quite grateful for that. From the Head down I've been treated as a Head of Faculty. I mean there's been the odd funny comment made, but I'd expect that from my friends!! (With humour)

10.1.5 A10: (Laughter)

10.1.6 B10: No, on the whole they've been very good.

They move on to talk about the initiatives that B10 has been able to take, and she mentions GCSE training and problems with allocating classrooms, but concludes that there have been few major changes. She adds.

10.2.1 B10: I think at the back of my mind has always been the notion that somebody else will be responsible for things next year, and I don't want to put them in a difficult position.

B10 talks about the mixed success she has had in dealing with staff who have been having discipline difficulties.

A10 reminds B10 of what she had written under "Plans for the Year Ahead" section, and wonders not only how B10 would like to support E. on his return, but also what sort of responsibility she would like to maintain. B10 hopes that she will be allowed to continue with the jobs she used to do, including administrative tasks, and possibly some kind of "project" - GCSE for example. B10 is aware that there are other members of the faculty who are eager for responsibility.

They discuss the in-service training needs that B10 has identified, and the school-based management course she has recently attended. A10 asks what sort of help B10 requires in order to make the next career move to becoming Head of Faculty. B10 says that she feels more confident to tackle such a post after this year's experience, but recognises that taking over as Head of Maths in a new school would be more difficult.

After some confusion about whether they are talking about B10 personally or the faculty as a whole, B10 explains the difficulty of ensuring that marking is always properly done and homework is always set within the faculty. She feels that the faculty is good on the whole, and that the Head's "checks" have coincided with a lot of "Computer Appreciation". B10 gives an example of a suitable "Computer Appreciation" homework but admits that other staff have not done this. A10 is a Maths teacher himself and confesses the same failing. B10 explains that following up homework can be very time consuming.

When questioned about the personal development changes B10 will need to make in order to keep pace with the new teaching methods required for GCSE, B10 talks about practical and investigative work, and confides that she does not feel comfortable with it. They discuss the compatability between class control and more pupil talk. B10 emphasises the importance of gaining respect from pupils.

B10 is quite happy that her classes have not changed this year, but A10 - as the school timetabler - asks whether there are any changes she would like to see. B10 discloses that she enjoys teaching bright sixth formers, but accepts the needs of other staff. A10 pauses to write down some points.

They discuss the disadvantages of staff sharing rooms - pupils writing on desks for example - and A10 asks how B10 would resolve this. She prefers to share rooms within the faculty and says that some members of staff, including senior ones, do nothing about pupils writing on desks etc.

A10 pauses to write again before they move on to a discussion on maintaining high standards. After asking for clarification, B10 elaborates on the prime importance of pupil achievement and proper pupil attitudes. A10 writes this down.

B10 agrees that not all faculty administrative tasks have been done on time, and they allude to the importance of forward planning. A10 pauses to write again.

They mention again the shortage of innovation as a result of B10's



temporary position. B10 says lightheartedly that the Head did not have much choice as far as her appointment was concerned, and she affirms once more that she has enjoyed the post. B10 is hesitant about getting a head of faculty position in the immediate future and confesses that she is under no pressure to move. She regards job enjoyment, and ten happy years at the school, as most valuable, but recognises that she may become too comfortable. B10 goes on to ask.

10.3.1 A10: You don't think that ten years here, or even longer, might start to work against you?

10.3.2 B10: Sure. It might be the question I would be asked at an interview. "Why did you stay ten years? Why didn't you look for promotion sooner?" You see, during those ten years I've gone from a (scale) one to a four, and that again could well work against me, but I've been in three other schools as well - four other schools - so for the first few years since I got married, I had to move and then ... I've had different jobs, a lot of different jobs while I've been here so I don't think it's a waste of time, but yes.

Long term aims are discussed briefly. B10 says that she likes her subject and teaching as well as the administration, but remains non-committal. A10 closes the interview.

The classification diagram (figure 5.10.1) indicates that the content of this interview was extensive and well balanced. There was discussion of various aspects of, and problems arising from, B10's role this year, as well as more personal reflections on the experience.

Figure 5.10.2 indicates that B10's teaching style was covered in some depth (TEACHING = 3.5 minutes), a topic not normally dealt with in appraisal interviews of those with managerial positions, (eg B6 =



Figure 5.10.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 10

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

The beneficial learning experience of this year's role.

Dealing with 'problem pupils'.

B10's 'stand-in' feelings.

B10's role next year.

INSET needs.

B10's teaching style and its development.

The importance of forward planning.

B10's timetable.

Thoughts on future promotion.

Reflections on ten years at the school.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

B10's relationships with faculty staff.

Faculty administrative work.

Initiatives taken by B10.

Effectiveness of marking and homework.

Problems arising from room sharing.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

The meaning of the headings used on the proforma.

Figure 5.10.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 10

Job Satisfaction	4
Job Dissatisfaction	2
Praise	0
Teaching	3.5
Plans/Targets	3
UNSET	1
Career Development	3.5
Other Staff	2
Management & Admin.	7
Curriculum	0
Resources	0
Whole School Issues	2
Individual Pupils	0.5
Classes	0
Other	3.5
Total	32 minutes

0.5, B9 = 0 minutes). However, B10 clarified afterwards that she had this expectation because of previous interview experiences. There was also the usual consideration of in-service training needs and future career plans. However, B10's post as acting Head of Maths (MANAGEMENT and ADMIN. = 7 minutes) provided the thread on which to hang most of the issues. The personal/reflective perspectives on this were woven together well with B10's more detached and objective observations.

The interview content summary shows quite well that the proforma is used systematically, and provided a useful structure for this interview. It did not restrict the content coverage - as was seen in interview 9 - because it was fully completed by B10, and used as the starting point for further elaboration by A10. In fact, on a very large number of occasions, A10 uses the comments that B10 has written down to stimulate further discussion. Typically the conversation would begin with A10 reading out the written remark and requesting B10 to expand. As in the example below, his questioning style is open with the emphasis very much on the appraisee as the one who might suggest the solution.

10.4.1 A10: Oh yes, "Help and Support Sought". "Management training" you've put down here. "How to give guidance to staff with difficulties". I'm just interested to see if you have any suggestions about how that might happen?

Interestingly, the headings themselves became a topic of conversation, which is of doubtful relevance, but is understandable given that this is the first appraisal interview that A10 has conducted, and that he is relying on the form so heavily. It may have helped to relieve the intense pressure of the interview

situation, and in the example below, enabled A10 to ask a question about something B10 had written.

10.5.1 A10: I find it difficult to sort of disseminate some of these words that we use for this self-appraisal. "Successes" and "Satisfactions". I don't know if it implies any sort of gradation there but when you said, "Organising the administration of the faculty", you were satisfied with that? Does that mean .. is that different to feeling it was a success?

10.5.2 B10: Oh, yes, I see them as graded. I'm satisfied, but the result is, you can always do better.

The quotation above is typical also of expressions of satisfaction from B10 (JOB SATISFACTION = 4 minutes).

#### Process Analysis

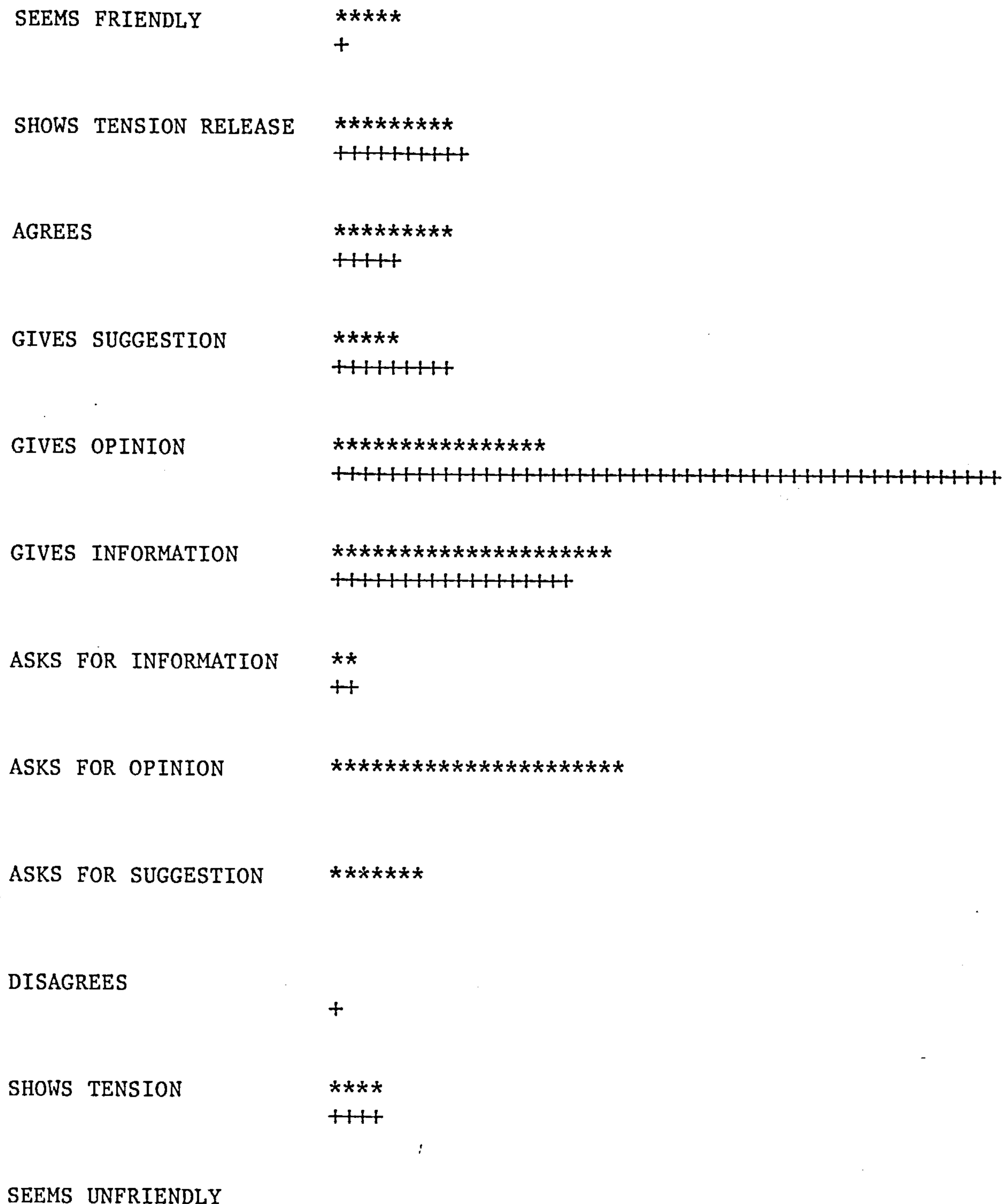
This interview was rather pedestrian in its pace, which I suspect was made all the worse by the breaks in conversation between sections, while A10 made his notes. Whilst it undoubtedly helps A10 produce a detailed and accurate report of the interview later, it may have been extremely off-putting for B10.

The slow speed of this interview adversely affected its fluency, and this fuelled a tension that is not readily apparent from the evidence of the words used, without the accompanying non-verbal messages. The verbal interaction profile (figure 5.10.3) shows a relatively high percentage in the 'shows tension' category. Much of this tension was de-fused by B10 herself, typically with (see 10.10.1) jocular remarks, which helps to explain the comparatively high figure (10%) in the 'shows tension release' category. That there is a submerged dissatisfaction from the appraisee's point of



Figure 5.10.3

VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 10



PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF UTTERANCES BY A10: \* B10: +

view is evident from the Interview Analysis Form (figure 5.10.4), an issue I will explore later in this section.

B10 spoke for 59% of the time (A10 = 41%), with half of her utterances grouped as 'opinion giving'. As might be expected, 'asks for opinion' scores highest (22%) from A10, followed closely by 'gives information' (21%). This high latter figure is due to the fact that A10 began most of his questions by re-stating what B10 had written on the form, or by simply reading it out. Such statements of 'fact' are classified as 'gives information'. This also helps to explain A10's high mean utterance length of 12 seconds (B10 = 17 seconds), when in reality, the actual questions he posed were quite brief and succinct.

Significantly, all of A10's 'seems friendly' comments occur in response to remarks by B10. In other words, he gave B10 recognition through encouraging responses rather than through initiating statements of praise or approval himself.

A10's questioning style is quite effective, and as part of the preamble he often used phrases like: "What I'm really interested to know . ." (10.1.1), (see also 10.4.1). This displays genuine concern rather than inquisitiveness. A10 allows B10 plenty of time for full reflection, without interruption. After they have completed that part of the form dealing with the "Year Past", A10 says:

10.6.1 A10: Is there anything else that you felt you missed, before we look at the "Year Ahead", where you may have reflected on something you put in under "Successes", "Satisfactions", "Problems", "Dissatisfactions", and so on?

10.6.2 B10: No - nothing comes to mind as such. No, I mean, the admin. seems to have gone quite well, but I think that's something that people could do - the personal side is more difficult.

In this interview there is considerable significance in the fact that it was a new experience for both. (Previously B10 had been interviewed in her capacity as second in department.) This influenced A10's behaviour most noticeably, although he became more confident as the interview progressed. As can be seen from the following extract, A10's opening remarks were hesitant and apologetic, and he was probably affected by the presence of the tape recorder. However, the self-effacing start may have had the effect of putting the appraisee at ease.

10.7.1 A10: O.K. D., I've had a look at your appraisal form obviously, and I've penned in some questions basically, to help sort of take us through ...

10.7.2 B10: Right.

10.7.3 A10: Unbeknowns to you, this is the first time I've actually done it from my side as well, whereas you've done it before, so in fact ...

10.7.4 B10: Yes, yes.

10.7.5 A10: I needed a question to give me guidance, anyway I felt I wanted to do justice to what you'd written down rather than do something that was totally different to what you'd written.

Although B10 gave opinions about her feelings, she was, nevertheless, fairly restrained and formal when presenting her answers. This may be symptomatic of an underlying tension, or merely a natural response to the formality of the situation. Her reluctance to speak freely and frankly was not as severe as B9, but in no way could the conversation be described as intimate, revealing, or confessional. Additionally, the fact that A10

provided very little feedback - emotional or substantive - did not engender relaxed responsiveness from B10. He must have given the impression that he was more concerned with keeping precise notes than responding to what B10 had just said. It could be suggested that one tends to converse cautiously if one believes that the interviewer is about to write down the answers verbatim. Nevertheless, the interview was not without its humorous asides, (see 10.1.4).

A10 was certainly concerned to avoid any kind of tension. The embarrassment he displayed in the following extract probably made things worse, although he was finally able to extricate himself from the tangle.

10.8.1 A10: Right, um, yes. "Preparation of Lessons and Marking". Very important, and hopefully always done - I'm sure it is D.

10.8.2 B10: Well it is. I think it's very important.

10.8.3 A10: I mean, no, I meant. Oh, yes, I know you know it's very important. I mean, I'm sure. What I meant by saying, "I'm sure that it's done", I meant the marking, not that I'm sure you know it's very important. I'm sure that yours is always done. Um, this is where I was a little concerned that this was, in fact, referring to you and not to the faculty.

10.8.4 B10: Um, it's me.

10.8.5 A10: Right.

10.8.6 B10: That's how I've answered it.

10.8.7 A10: Right, fine.

10.8.8 B10: Personally.

10.8.9 A10: I've put "yours, question mark" as my question, simply to say that I'm assuming that as far as the faculty is concerned, how do you ...

10.8.10 B10: Now that's more difficult.



From B10's point of view the most strained section of the interview was the discussion of her teaching methods, which highlighted a conflict between B10's preferred 'traditional' teaching style and the more 'progressive' approaches that she recognised as an inevitable part of GCSE.

10.9.1 A10: I did look at the tenth part you'll see there - the "Teaching Method and Presentation" - that's a very personal comment?

10.9.2 B10: Yes, yes.

10.9.3 A10: You've written down, "Still chalk and talk, usually with success - need to practice new investigative type ..." etc. I just wondered really what personal development change do you envisage to be able to, if you like, keep apace with the development that's taking place in GCSE.

10.9.4 B10: Well, I don't have any choice, do I?

10.9.5 A10: No. You say you don't have any choice.

10.9.6 A10: No. I haven't.

10.9.7 A10: I mean, with respect to your method, the presentation, how would you expect to see it change? You said here that you still use chalk and talk with success. When you say you need to practice, practice what?

10.9.8 B10: Well, the investigational work, the practical work, that sort of thing, which will be quite a large part of the Maths course in a few years time. I mean, I've got to be good at it. I've got to be able to lead the pupils.

10.9.9 A10: So what you've got to be good at is leading the pupils?

10.9.10 B10: Yes, yes.

10.9.11 A10: Right.

10.9.12 B10: I mean, if I don't know how to do it, how will I expect to teach them how to?

10.9.13 A10: Right.

10.9.14 B10: I don't feel comfortable with it.

10.9.15 A10: (after a pause) So, does that mean a change of emphasis from chalk and talk to talk?

10.9.16 B10: Not me talking, them talking. Yes, a change of

emphasis. I don't ever see myself going the whole way. I think I will always want to play a leading role in the classroom, but I've got to learn to listen a little bit more.

Later, in the same conversation, they are discussing noise levels in classes which result from using more 'active' learning approaches.

10.10.1 B10: Given the choice, I will have a silent environment, but that's been pointed out to me that that's not a good learning environment! (with sarcasm). Therefore I will try. It's going to take time. I've been teaching too long. (laughter)

This extract illustrates how B10 copes with the irritation that derives from the admission that she will have to come to terms with increased pupil noise in class. As mentioned earlier, she relieves it with laughter - an act of tension release.

As already noted, the Interview Analysis Forms are somewhat incongruent (figure 5.10.4). A10 is not particularly satisfied with B10's response to him (question 1), although he appears to be quite happy with his own performance. B10's non-committal responses to the questions on the form are in contrast not only to A10, but also to the other appraisees, who were generally favourable in their perceptions of their appraisers' behaviour. I felt that it was necessary to ask B10 to elaborate upon her Interview Analysis Form, with the hope of gleaning further clues concerning the suggestion of 'underlying tension' revealed by my analysis of the tape alone.

B10 later confirmed her dissatisfaction with the interview, as the following field notes indicate:

B10: I didn't come away thinking that he'd achieved anything, or I'd achieved anything, basically.

Figure 5.10.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A10

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B10

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 ~~X~~ 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Flexible

Frank 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 ~~X~~ 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems ~~X~~ 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~X~~ 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely 1 ~~X~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems



B10: There wasn't a lot of concreteness about it. I didn't actually get anything out. I sort of wrote it off, basically.

There were a number of reasons for this:

1. B10 had completed the proforma as a classroom teacher rather than as a head of faculty, and her expectations were based upon this. A10, on the other hand, appraised B10 primarily as a head of faculty, which came as something of a surprise to B10.
2. As was noted earlier, A10 was new to the school and new to appraisal interviewing.

B10: I don't think he knew fully what was expected of him.

However, B10 recognised that since it was the first appraisal interview that A10 had conducted, he was at a disadvantage.

3. In evaluating A10's performance on the Interview Analysis Form, B10 may have been comparing him with E., her usual appraiser. She felt that the interview was superficial because A10 simply did not know her well enough.

B10: I'd been interviewed by E. for years and I think he knew more about me.

4. B10 felt also that she had got off too lightly.

B10: There was no open criticism, constructive or otherwise, - which I think there could have been.



## General Conclusions

B10 does not find it easy to talk about herself, although she recognises that this is expected of her in a self-appraisal interview. Her professional judgement tells her to engage in the encounter with this aim, but her personal preference would be to opt out of such a conversation with a person who does not yet know her well enough. B10 had experienced some valuable interviews with her usual "boss" and, for a number of reasons, her expectations this year were not realised.

Clearly, in this interview, B10 did not accept A10 as a legitimate appraiser and therefore the interview was bound to be unsatisfactory. However, A10 conducted the interview quite well, but given that he is new to the school, he could not possibly have been in the position of knowing B10 and her work well enough, and deserves to be excused - something that B10 would also accept.

This interview highlights the crucial importance of an existing personal and professional relationship between appraiser and appraisee. To be effective, appraisers may have to "earn" their right to be there - and this would include having a fairly detailed knowledge of the appraisee's job.

## INTERVIEW 11

All (also B10) is the 'acting' Head of the Maths Faculty. She is interviewing B11 who is the Head of Computing, which is a department within the faculty. B11 joined the school this year and it is therefore her first appraisal interview. It is also the first year that All has conducted appraisal interviews in her new capacity as faculty head. The interview lasted for 64 minutes.

### Content Analysis

All began the interview by explaining clearly how she intends to proceed during the interview, and what happens afterwards. All reminds B11 of what she has written under the "Successes" heading, and asks why B11 thinks Computer Appreciation has been successful. B11 states that it has quite simply "worked", and that teaching notes have been useful. All compliments her on this achievement and they talk further about this course. All wonders whether B11 envisages making any changes to the course, and B11 expands upon the constraint imposed by examinations. All suggests that things would be clearer if Computer Appreciation was written into the Maths syllabuses. B11 suggests that it would be even better if time were allocated to it from elsewhere. All agrees, and refers to a mooted Information Technology course that did not get off the ground. When asked about how she would feel about running such a course, B11 says she would be pleased to do so, but mentions that many information technology courses are not entirely "hands-on".

B11 refers to the shortage of "networked" material for first year

pupils and the fact that she has not had the opportunity to meet any of the "Meadnet" people, having missed meetings. All suggests telephoning the person who runs the group, but B11 responds by saying that it is difficult to get hold of teachers in school time. They talk briefly about the Computer Appreciation Support Group and the possibility of B11 chairing this group.

B11 feels that she has written some "good tests" (for pupils), and All suggests sharing these improvements. All compliments B11 on having established good relations with other faculty staff but B11 uses the opportunity to expound upon some of her frustrations.

11.1.1 All: So you feel that you've settled in with us?

11.1.2 B11: As far as the staff are concerned, yes.

11.1.3 All: Go on, there's a "But" there.

11.1.4 B11: (Laughter)

11.1.5 All: Go on, carry on.

11.1.6 B11: Well, let's put it this way ...

11.1.7 All: Honestly, now.

11.1.8 B11: Honestly, this time last year, I was happily looking for scale threes. This time this year - if I could take early retirement and afford it - I would do, at the end of this year.

11.1.9 All: Mmmh, why?

11.1.10 B11: Third years (year 9), fifth years (year 11).

11.1.11 All: So, you're happy that you've settled in ...

11.1.12 B11: (interrupting) And, and. No. Third years, fifth years and... I don't quite know why. There's a constant pressure of work and the feeling that I'm never ....

The conversation is interrupted while All answers the telephone.



11.1.13 All: Sorry about that, I should have taken it off to start with. Now - this is important. So you're happier with the staff and that side of it. You're not happy with the quantity of work.

11.1.14 B11: (Hesitantly) Um, its ... I don't know what it is. I've just felt overwhelmed and that I've never caught up. There's always something else.

B11 goes on to explain that she is new to the school, with new classes, unfamiliar textbooks - some of them unsuitable, - and no back-up exercises. She refers to the pressure of writing tests, marking, and the completion of reports, all for different year groups, as well as regular marking, and the co-ordination of Computer Appreciation. She describes this as routine work.

11.2.1 B11: There always seems to be ...

11.2.2 All: ... something hanging over you.

11.2.3 B11: Something hanging over you - that's a good word.

B11 expresses despair. All describes this as normal and they discuss long-term planning as a possible solution to this problem. B11 mentions the heavy workload, especially in the evenings. All believes that if one works solidly from 3.15 p.m. to 6 p.m., there should be no need to take work home. B11 outlines the various tasks that take up her time after school. Referring to her own experience, All makes suggestions about how to utilise time more effectively, for example by working in one's classroom rather than the faculty room, and thereby avoiding wasting time chatting. B11 tries to suggest that she can not do this because of the cleaners, but All rejects this excuse.

As well as discussing the therapeutic benefits of talking to people, All suggests that B11 should prioritise her jobs and stick to a



going home time. Given that one expects difficulties in the first year, All predicts that things should ease off now, and that if B11 can not go home at 6 p.m. each night, then something is wrong. All explains that Computer Appreciation is now prepared and should not need much extra work. She offers also, to pass some of B11's workload to other staff. B11 complains that with five Maths classes she has not had much time for Computing. All asks about the usefulness of sharing preparation with someone working in parallel, but B11 claims that it has not made much difference. They see the need for meetings about improving the second year Maths course. B11 complains that the person in charge has not really looked enough at the textbooks being used, so All agrees to have a word with him.

All asks about the good relationship that B11 has established with her first year (year 7) group, and B11 alludes to some improvement with second (year 8), third (year 9), and fourth (year 10) years. All agrees that taking on a group at the beginning of their fifth (year 11) year can be most difficult. B11 feels quite bitter about the inaccurate estimations of ability she was given, but in the uncertainty says she may be doing someone an injustice. The result of this was that she pitched the teaching too high, let some of them down, and felt a failure. All asks what she would do differently with a similar fifth year group next year, and B11 mentions greater use of worksheets, finding out exactly what they had done previously, and the use of a textbook which they had not worked on before, in her reply. All affirms the importance of learning from experience.

All asks whether B11 is happy to take her fourth year class through

to the fifth year, and B11 agrees that things are satisfactory with this group, with the caveat that the actual pupils it contains may be changed.

They move on to the "Problems" section and A11 provides a precis of the points B11 has already made about the fifth year class. They review why the third year group was disastrous. B11 identifies her lack of confidence, early mistakes, and the need she felt to "struggle on". She refers also to what is written in the 'Staff Handbook' about the classroom teacher's responsibility to maintain discipline, which B11 interprets to mean as her failure when discipline problems arise. She explains that this is merely theory, and that individual pupils in the classroom do not necessarily respond to praise. She emphasises the need to survive, and that she never really got on top of troublesome pupils, referring to one particular pupil as an example of this. A11 points out that the member of staff who took over this particular class from B11 half way through the year is coping, and asks B11 to reflect on why this should be so. A11 suggests that B11 observes other teachers at work and she agrees, both commenting on the usefulness of this activity. A11 goes on to provide her own frank explanation for B11's ineffectiveness.

B11 expresses concern that she is failing the pupils who do want to work, and illustrates this by reference to some girls in a particular group. She recounts an occasion when pupils were talking to her about schooling, expressing their view that working for examinations was pointless. A11 suggests that the Tutorial Programme could be used to get across the value of working at

school, and wonders also whether teachers are not partly to blame for engendering such attitudes.

All moves on to the "Dissatisfactions" section and they both read out what Bll had written. Bll recalls an incident when she actually did follow-up a miscreant, but wonders whether it really is worth all the time and effort that one puts in to chasing up pupils. All explains that if one is firm at the beginning with pupils, this situation should not arise, believing also that it is always worth following things up. All outlines the value of setting clear behavioural expectations at the outset, and the importance of enforcing one's personality on a class.

In their discussion of "Frustrations", All agrees that Bll's room is rather small, and hopes that things will be better next year. Bll wants to be able to get into her room to put things on the wall or blackboard, but she recognises that she should not disturb other classes.

They discuss "lack of sanctions" as a frustration that Bll has noted. Bll regrets that she can not keep pupils behind after school without notice because of the need to catch buses, and wonders what sanctions exist. She recalls some advice given to her by another member of the faculty staff on how to deal with this. All agrees and uses the anecdote to illustrate how one can enforce one's personality on a group. Bll presses All for a list of other sanctions and All provides this at length. All reminds Bll that she is the only one who can win.



11.3.1 All: It's you, it's all down to you in the end. But I like what you said you got from P.W., and that you used it, and it's been successful. I think that's good.

11.3.2 B11: It's what I needed at the beginning unfortunately.

11.3.3 All: Confidence.

11.3.4 B11: That's right.

11.3.5 All: Confidence seems to be the most important word for you at the moment.

All offers to see the school timetabler about more time for Computing tasks, and they discuss lack of time for seeing sixth formers and evaluating software.

Under "Plans and Targets", B11 hopes to improve her own computing skills and GCSE work. B11 complains that one of the faculty staff appears to have "backed-off" from her.

All expresses concern that B11 had written "Survivial!" under "Longer Term Ideas and Plans", and re-iterates the advice she had given her about utilising time, prioritising tasks, and marking. B11 says that her marking has become less of a chore and they discuss speedy marking techniques in more detail.

B11 recalls the pressure of time in the previous week with three meetings that she had to attend. All speculates that the new contract could make things worse in this respect. This allows B11 to mention (threaten?) her response to such a situation.

11.4.1 All: God help us next year if we have a meeting every night of the week. When are we going to do our preparation? - but that's another issue.

11.4.2 B11: Well, if that comes about, I think I'll hand my



notice in. (laughter)

11.4.3 All: Oh, now, don't say that!

11.4.4 B11: Well, yes, if we were going to be working here till five, doing extra things, and then on top of that, had to do preparation and marking, I'm afraid that I will say, "Right! That's it!" The pay is not worth it. We will sell the house and find a little house.

11.4.5 All: That's awful.

11.4.6 B11: I'm serious.

11.4.7 All: Well, let's hope it doesn't come to that. I'm sure you are, definitely. But involve the rest of us. Let us help you if we can. Alright?

All refers to the need to sort out computing and the help that she will be able to give B11. All draws the interview to a close.

All opened the interview by explaining, very carefully, the pattern she intends to follow during the interview, and the procedure after it is over. Since B11 is new to the school, this is a very useful beginning, and something that A8 could well have included.

All uses the proforma to structure the interview, but it in no way acts as a constraint, since the most important content items are explored at considerable length. All controls the timing of the interview and does not allow B11 to "take over" with over-extended speeches or irrelevant material.

The content classification (figure 5.11.1) table shows very clearly the pervading influence of topics at the INDIVIDUAL level. In view of the very serious class control problems that B11 has had in her first year at the school, this prominence is perfectly legitimate. This is reflected also in figure 5.11.2 where JOB DISSATISFACTION (20.5 minutes) and TEACHING (13.5 minutes) dominate the interview.

Figure 5.11.1 CONTENT CLASSIFICATION FOR INTERVIEW 11

Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level

Possibility of B11 chairing support group.

Pupil 'tests' written by B11.

Pressure of work.

Settling in difficulties.

Heavy workload, especially Maths teaching.

Time utilisation and task prioritisation.

Problems and possible solutions with 3rd and 5th year classes.

Troublesome individual pupils.

All's thoughts on B11's classroom ineffectiveness.

Taking effective disciplinary action.

Problems with room access.

B11's role as Head of Computing.

Marking strategies.

Resignation conditions.

Topics at the DEPT./FACULTY/YEAR TEAM level

Computer Appreciation course.

Possibility of an Information Technology course.

Complaints from B11 about staff.

Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level

The appraisal procedure.

Usefulness of staff handbook.

School sanctions regarding indiscipline.

Figure 5.11.2

CONTENT/TIME ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEW 11

Job Satisfaction	2
Job Dissatisfaction	20.5
Praise	1.5
Teaching	13.5
Plans/Targets	4.5
UNSET	0.5
Career Development	0.5
Other Staff	3
Management & Admin.	6.5
Curriculum	2
Resources	0.5
Whole School Issues	4
Individual Pupils	1
Classes	4
Other	0
Total	64 minutes

Her managerial role, as Head of Computing, is not totally ignored in any case, although the time spent on this (MANAGEMENT and ADMIN = 6.5 minutes) is 'relatively' less than that for the more well established department heads, (B6 and B9 for example).

Unlike many of the other interviews, there was no significant discussion of future career plans (CAREER DEVELOPMENT = 0.5 minutes), although it could be argued that B11's reference to resignation comes under this category.

Undoubtedly, the dominating content area in this interview concerns the very acute frustration and despair that B11 has experienced with discipline difficulties. (JOB DISSATISFACTION accounts for 32% of the time). The following extract is indicative of B11's despondency, and her wish to find a scapegoat for problems which they both know, can only be solved by B11 herself.

11.5.1 All: Let's go back to the third years you started with. Why was that so disastrous?

11.5.2 B11: I keep asking myself this over and over again. I think, partly, it was my own lack of confidence, which I will always have, I'm afraid. If I'd had the confidence to walk out of that classroom, the first day I'd had them, found you, and say, "This lot are behaving abominably!", I think that probably would have worked. But one doesn't. One struggles on.

11.5.3 All: Why? Why do you struggle on?

11.5.4 B11: Because you feel that you're failing if you don't struggle - and so you try.

11.5.5 All: It's all personal, isn't it?

11.5.6 B11: And, one has a handbook given out, which talks about the teacher who fails as the one who hasn't prepared the work, and so on and so forth. And the children need praise. You've read the pages in there ...

11.5.7 All: Oh, yes.



11.5.8 B11: And I think that, really, puts it back on to you, and you are failing if you are not achieving all this. I really feel that that is not helpful at all. I know the theory, and it's exactly the same theory we did at college not all that long ago. But it's theory, in that when you're face to face in a classroom situation, there are individuals in there who are not going to take one jot of interest in any praise and all the rest of it. And you've got to survive, and after you've survived, you can start praising and the rest of it. I feel that you've got to get the upper hand and that, at the back of your mind, doesn't help at all.

11.5.8 All: Forget it then.

11.5.9 B11: (Laughter) But there were so many of them, I just never got on top of them.

Under the heading, "Longer Term Ideas and Plans", B11 had simply written "Survival!" The bulk of this interview is the story of how B11 had felt that she was not coping. The reasons for this had been explored in considerable depth; with B11 drawing mainly on situational factors, and All emphasising teacher-based personal ones. All offered some concrete suggestions on how B11 could overcome some of her problems, as can be seen from the following extract.

11.6.1 All: Number eight. "Survival!"

11.6.2 B11: (Laughter)

11.6.3 All: So?

11.6.4 B11: Yes, I mean ...

11.6.5 All: We've covered that one, haven't we?

11.6.6 B11: Yes.

11.6.7 All: I'm sorry to hear you say that now. I mean, I know you've been under pressure, and you've sort of said things to me all along, but I don't think I've realised just how bad, perhaps, you'd been feeling. So, please, for a week, will you finish at six o'clock. And if books don't get marked, books don't get marked. Try it. But work hard between three and six, and get a list of priorities - things that have to be done for the next day. And try to get them done, if possible so that you have something to teach the kids, and where possible, their books are marked.

Thus, the content of this interview was oriented towards the personal difficulties that the appraisee had suffered in the year past. From B11's position, it was retrospective and negative. For All the objective was to look ahead and be positive. This is summarised well by All's final comment on the written "report" of the interview.

J. has had a tough year! She has had to get used to a new environment, cope with a heavy teaching load, and overcome a variety of discipline problems. I hope that she will find next year easier.

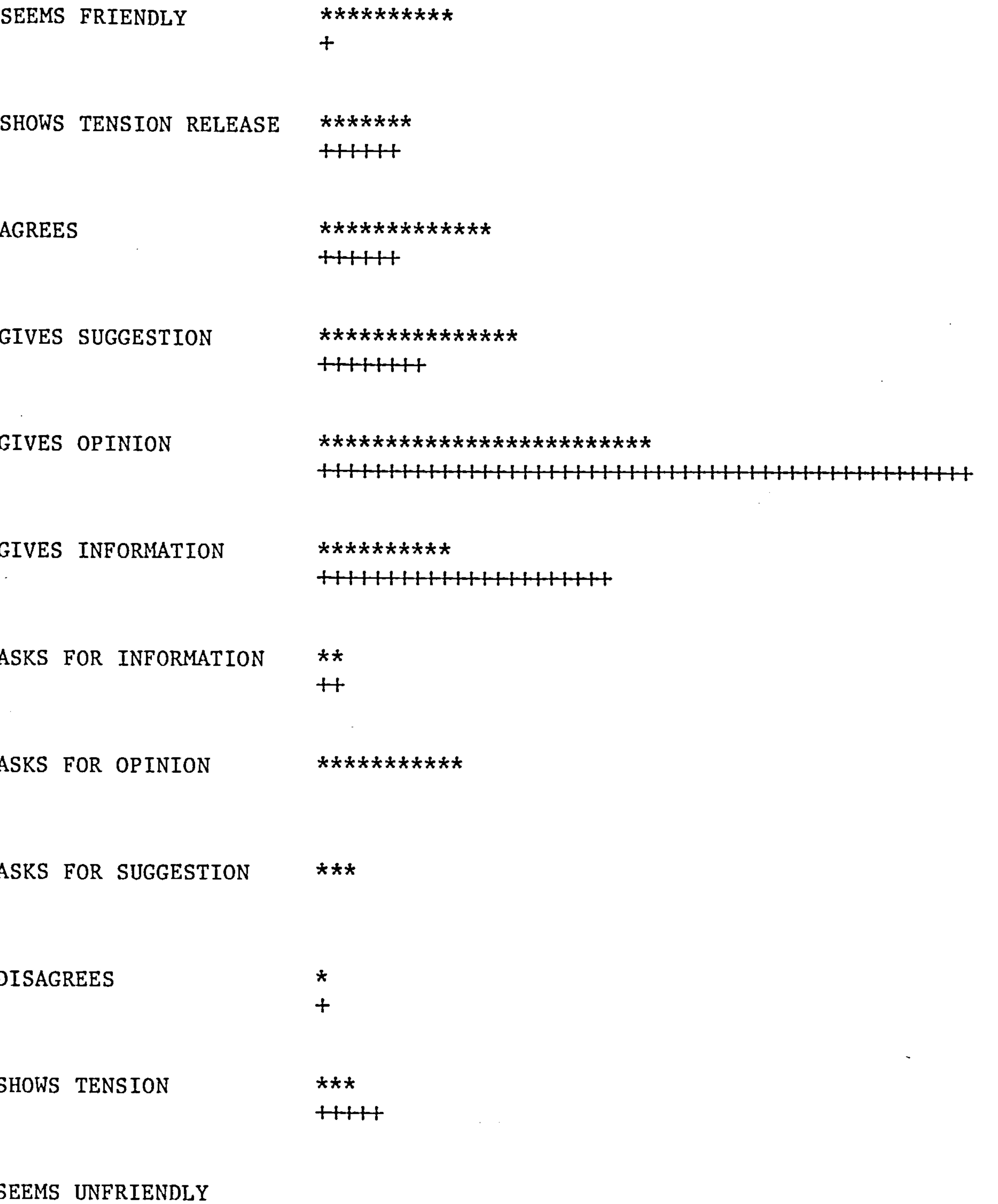
#### Process Analysis

In view of All's active involvement in the interview, it is not too surprising to find that she spoke for 52% of the time, (B11 = 48%). Both were able to sustain fairly long speeches: mean utterance length for All = 25 seconds, B11 = 24 seconds. As can be seen from the profile (figure 5.11.3), All gave a large number of opinions and more significantly, a very high proportion of 'gives suggestions' (15%). All offers counselling and plenty of practical ideas during the interview. As shown in the profile, instances of 'shows tension' did occur in the interview, mainly when All gave a rather "cool" reaction to some of B11's excuses, and when B11 herself was being made to face some of her own inadequacies. However, these did not have a degenerating effect on the interview - they were usually laughed off with acts of 'tension release'.

All was supportive throughout, and there were many instances of agreement and overt friendly acts. Both participants gave opinions

Figure 5.11.3

VERBAL BEHAVIOUR PROFILE FOR INTERVIEW 11



PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF UTTERANCES BY A11: \* B11: +

freely and frankly. In fact, B11 was able to "open up" extremely well about "bad times", which was fostered also by All's sympathetic responses and probing questioning.

The "boss"/subordinate role relationship was very evident in the interview, although it was less overt than that seen in interview 8. In this case, the topics under discussion were more vital and more keenly felt. B11's "cry for help" was dealt with very professionally by her head of faculty, who provided answers with thoughtfulness and integrity. All did not let B11 get away completely with admitting failure yet blaming others. By perceptive analysis and a great deal of positive emotional support, she was able to help B11 considerably. That she did this without upsetting B11 unduly, is obvious from B11's Interview Analysis Form (figure 5.11.4), where she gives All an almost "perfect score".

All tries to capitalise on the problems that B11 describes. After B11's complaint that she was not given accurate estimates of the group's ability, and her description of the mistakes she made, All asks.

11.7.1 All: Can we make use of that now? Next year, if we gave you a middle fifth year ...

11.7.2 B11: A middle fifth year?

11.7.3 All: Right, which is what you had in our classification.

11.7.4 B11: Yeah, yeah.

11.7.5 All: What would you do differently?

Thus All is getting her to think about how performance improvement can be achieved - a major objective for appraisal schemes, and a key



Figure 5.11.4 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR A11

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 ~~6~~ 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe YOURSELF during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 ~~3~~ 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 ~~2~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 ~~5~~ 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 ~~2~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 ~~2~~ 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

3. How satisfied were you with your performance during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 ~~3~~ 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

4. How nearly did you achieve your objective?

Completely 1 2 3 4 ~~5~~ 6 7 Not at all

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS FORM FOR B11

1. How satisfied were you with the other person's response to you during the appraisal interview?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

2. Please describe your APPRAISER during the interview.

Rigid 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Flexible

Frank 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Reticent

Considerate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Inconsiderate

Talked too much 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Talked too little

Interested in appraisee's problems 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disinterested in appraisee's problems

5. Please list future ACTIONS agreed:

task therefore for appraisal interviewers.

This kind of focus inevitably puts an emotional strain on the appraisee, and B11 does not always accept suggestions without some kind of resistance. However, when A11 suggests that B11 can find more time to work by staying in her classroom after school, B11 offers a weak excuse which is quickly disposed of by A11.

11.8.1 A11: Well, can I make a couple of suggestions, but don't misunderstand me. Cut out the talking. What I've found I've had to do in the past is work in my classroom. I've gone in there at 3.15 and I've come out to go home. You'll be surprised then ...

11.8.2 B11: Yeah, except that the cleaners want to get in.

11.8.3 A11: They can clean around you. Oh, yes, they used to come in for me.

11.8.4 B11: That's something I've felt the need for - to get out of the classroom because the cleaners want to get in.

11.8.5 A11: There's no need to come out for the cleaners. You can apologise and say, "You don't mind cleaning round me?". But I find, if I go into the faculty room, I've wasted an hour.

However, towards the end of the interview, A11 gives a somewhat over-optimistic summary, and it is B11 who wins the following point.

11.9.1 A11: So, the books have got easier; you've got more confidence; everything's going the right way isn't it?

11.9.2 B11: Except that this last two to three weeks it suddenly seems to have come again. There's this and there's that. Three meetings after school last week.

11.9.3 A11: Did you have to go to all three?

11.9.4 B11: What were they? I can't remember. Staff meeting - which we had to go to. TTNS meeting, and the management one. I suppose I could have not gone to the management one ...

11.9.5 A11: No. It would be a pity. Don't get me wrong. It

would be a pity if you don't go to meetings, for your sake and for the school's sake.

11.9.6 B11: But that was the thing - there were three last week.

B11 is not really prepared to let All get away with saying (11.9.1) how rosy everything is, and is able to counter by citing clear evidence of how time is eaten up with meetings. Thus B11's frustrations have not melted away entirely as a result of this interview.

B11 uses the interview to complain about a number of items, some of which are legitimate. However, many of these frustrations come across as plaintive whines and do not always secure the reaction she would like. The following criticism of a computing colleague is effectively ignored by All, who uses humour to counter B11's gloominess, and the fact that C. is leaving, to move rapidly on to the next topic.

11.10.1 B11: C. I've felt has backed off. We've done very little co-operation and ...

11.10.2 All: Oh, I will be looking for you to lead, whole-heartedly.

11.10.3 B11: (Laughter) Well, I think it will be mutual - I think we'll help each other. There's a slight diffidence with C. - I don't quite know what. I wonder sometimes if he doesn't like having to ask me. I don't know, but there's definitely - there's a little barrier between C. and I, so we haven't worked together. I mean, if I ask him to do something he'll always help me and so on. If he asks me, O.K. But there is a barrier of some sort, whether it's an age barrier or what, I don't know.

11.10.4 All: I hope it's not an age barrier - he's been inundated with women this year!!

11.10.5 B11: (Laughter)

11.10.6 All: That's something of course that will be out.



All may feel that it is inappropriate to discuss a third party, and possibly, that speculation on the reasons for C.'s "coolness" would not do anything to improve B11's self-image.

As was seen in the previous extract (11.10.4), All has the ability to relieve tension. The following example is part of B11's heartpouring analysis of why the third year group had gone so badly. All's frivolous remark (11.11.2) has the effect of giving B11 an emotional boost, and is not interpreted as lack of seriousness on All's part.

11.11.1 B11: I should have gone into that classroom and I should have either set about one of them, taking him by the scruff of the neck possibly ...

11.11.2 All: No physical violence please!!

(Laughter)

11.11.3 B11: Certainly, metaphorically done that, and maybe, having done that with one of them, it might have, sort of, calmed the others down.

Perhaps the most significant feature of this interview is All's commendable attempt to get at the heart of B11's discipline problems. The following conversation takes place just after B11 has condemned the advice in the staff handbook as unhelpful, and that one particular boy is immune to any kind of disciplinary action.

11.12.1 All: D. is coping. (D. had taken over the difficult group).

11.12.2 B11: Yeah.

11.12.3 All: Now why is he coping?

11.12.4 B11: Now this is what I've thought so often. Why can he walk in there and they all shut up. Um, I don't know.

11.12.5 All: Well, you know, it's something perhaps that we



can learn from. I mean, classes do respond differently to different people. And it might be of interest. How would you feel about observing some other teachers?

11.12.6 B11: I'd quite like to do that actually.

11.12.7 All: You wouldn't feel that, you know, pride is at stake, and all the rest of it.

11.12.8 B11: No, I think it's useful to see what other people do.

The implied suggestion is that if one person can cope, (who is, incidentally, also a newcomer), then we are not talking about unteachable pupils. This places the emphasis very firmly on the teacher as the main influence on pupil behaviour in the classroom. All also makes a practical suggestion (11.12.5) that may help B11 improve her teaching ability. By stating later that All believes all teachers should do this, the idea takes on a more acceptable form for B11 and she is less likely to feel singled out. After they both comment on the value of classroom observation, All returns to the key issue, and re-submits the central question that she feels B11 must face.

11.13.1 All: Oh yeah, that's fine, it's just, the question, you know. You've not been successful with a class, D. has, why? What's the difference between you? And I think it comes down to personality. He is prepared and quite happy to go as far as it takes when something's wrong. And I think you're backing-off. And you shouldn't be afraid. Because we've all had problems with our classes. I've had a class taken off me. Exactly the same situation as yourself. I could not cope! (with emphasis). And they were taken off and given to someone else, and next year my Head of Faculty gave me a similar ability class again and I coped. You know, it does work. I think you've got to make your presence felt. You're too nice. We've had this conversation before. You're too nice and I think sometimes your attitude towards the kids is too cajoling and pleasant.

This speech is a clever combination of harsh truths and compliments. The advice it contains is undoubtedly sound, but the addition of an

anecdote about All's own past failings makes the statement more palatable for B11. Few appraisers dare to criticise so openly, but one could argue that this situation required it. When All did not get an answer to the question she initially posed (11.12.3), she decided to come back and answer it herself (11.13.1). The issue has not been side-stepped and there was no noticeable damage done to the relationship.

As already noted, B11's Interview Analysis Form (figure 5.11.4), suggests that she was totally satisfied with All's response to her. This indicates that appraisers can make their own input - in the role of 'critical friend' - which does not deflate the appraisee.

Surprisingly perhaps, All's Interview Analysis Form indicates a less favourable perception of her performance. The fact that she has not avoided delicate issues may have led her to believe that she had been slightly inconsiderate. Her feeling of dissatisfaction (question 3) with the interview as a whole, may be due to: modesty; B11's negative and dejected attitude; or a transference of her feelings about the interview content to her own performance. However, in this case, depressing interview content can not be blamed on the appraiser. In fact, it could be argued that the appraiser has performed extremely well in view of the stressful circumstances of this particular encounter.

#### General Conclusions

From B11's point of view, the appraisal interview was a valuable opportunity to spill forth some of the most troubling aspects of her

professional life in the past year. The exploration of B11's problems, particularly with discipline, dominated the content of the interview.

All handled the issues with a combination of forcefulness and sensitivity; which turned a potentially dreary monologue, into a much more dynamic, positive, and therapeutic encounter. She achieved this through active involvement, probing questioning, and by offering solutions. The message: "I can help you, but you must also help yourself", is the essence of this. She confided later:

All: I set out with the intention of trying to make B11 face a few home truths, and then hopefully build on them.

## Chapter Six

### GENERALITIES AND ISSUES RELATING TO CONTENT



## INTRODUCTION

Chapters Six, Seven and Eight attempt to pull together all of the data gathered about teacher appraisal interviews, and to identify common features as well as differences. The script is both descriptive and explanatory.

The account makes use of three levels of analysis:

- a) There are objective interpretations - usually of quantitative data - which do not require researcher insight.
- b) There are subjective interpretations - usually of qualitative data - which are occasionally enhanced by "insider" knowledge.
- c) The identification of relationships and higher level categories integrates the research findings.

The distinction between interview "content" and "process" is maintained, and a further chapter deals with "umbrella" matters that do not fit conveniently under these two headings because they have an overarching significance. Within each of these three chapters a further subdivision is employed:

- 1. GENERALITIES - the interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data from all sources can result in inferences about the characteristics of teacher appraisal interviews at the study school. The aim of this section is to identify that

which is typical. Considerable use is made of numerical evidence, but there are two very serious problems with regard to the statistical analysis of the quantitative data. Firstly, the sample size (11) is extremely small. Secondly, as pointed out in Chapter Three, the selection of interviews for study was not random. The following analysis recognises the limitations that small sample size and bias represents.

2. ISSUES - the identification of 'features' of the appraisal interview is a key objective for this research. This section focusses on a discussion of the salient points.

As outlined in Chapter Three, a series of semi-structured interviews with a further nine members of staff at the study school were carried out. The analysis of this data is incorporated into these chapters as additional evidence. In many instances the 'respondents' are quoted verbatim.

## Chapter Six GENERALITIES AND ISSUES RELATING TO CONTENT

### CONTENT GENERALITIES

#### Levels

Figure 6.1 illustrates the distribution of topics amongst the three levels. A clear pattern emerges, with half of the topics discussed classified as relating directly to the individual appraisee. A further third of the topics relate to the department/faculty or year team level. The average number of separately identifiable topics for an interview is 16, although the time devoted to these will vary considerably. It must also be remembered that the decision about what constitutes a discrete topic is a subjective one made by the researcher.

As might be expected, there appears to be a relationship between the number of topics covered in an interview and the length of the interview. This was tested using the Spearman rank correlation statistic. A correlation coefficient of +0.89 was calculated, which is significant at the 1% level. Therefore one can be 99% confident that there is a positive statistical relationship between interview length and the number of separate topics discussed.

#### Content/time Categories - Similarities

A more useful set of summary statistics is that relating to the content/time data collected for each interview, which is shown as figure 6.2. The derivation of the content categories was explained in Chapter Three. It appears that a very wide range of topics

Figure 6.1 Summary Data on Content Classification According to LEVEL

Interview number	Topics at an INDIVIDUAL level	Topics at the DEPT/FAC/YEAR level	Topics at the WHOLE SCHOOL level	Total
1	7	4	0	11
2	9	5	2	16
2a	8	3	5	16
3	6	3	2	11
4	8	15	3	26
6	5	7	3	15
7	9	3	5	17
8	11	7	3	21
9	2	6	1	9
10	10	5	1	16
11	15	3	3	21
Total	90	61	28	179
%	50	34	16	100



indeed form relevant material for a teacher appraisal interview, and even the fifteen content categories in figure 6.2 serve to obscure the diversity.

The most commonly discussed topic is the CURRICULUM (14.6%), but this figure is inflated by the unusually large (37 minutes) slice of time devoted to this item in interview number 4. If one discounts this interview, a more realistic assessment of the importance of this topic would produce a figure of 8.1% - which still recognises it as one of the more important areas for discussion. It was also noted as a major topic by two 'respondents'.

It is not surprising that TEACHING activity of the appraisee emerges as a leading item. Topics of conversation that come under this heading as identified by 'respondents' included things like: classroom style, teaching techniques, and groupwork. However, given the nature of teachers' work, one might have expected discussion of teaching to occupy a much greater proportion of time. It is most noticeably absent in those interviews where the appraisees have managerial responsibilities.

The significance of JOB DISSATISFACTION as a discussion area is considerably enhanced when one recognises that it was identified by eight of the nine 'respondents' as a major topic. This could be because it represents a heading on the proforma, or that the 'respondents' are more likely to recall such matters. In many cases these were described as problems, frustrations, gripes or calls for help. This is a key issue I shall be returning to.

Figure 6.2

Summary DataContent/Time Analysis (in minutes)

Interview No.	1	2	2a	3	4	6	7	8	9	10	11	TOT	%
A Job Satisfaction	3	0	4	0	2	3.5	0.5	2	0	4	2	21	4.0
B Job Dissatisfaction	2	5	7.5	0	1.5	2	4	2	0	2	20.5	46.5	8.9
C Praise	0	7	6.5	1	1	3.5	4.5	3.5	0	0	1.5	28.5	5.4
C Teaching	5.5	2	1.5	5.5	5	0.5	24	13	0	3.5	13.5	74	14.1
D Plans/targets	1.5	3.5	11.5	4	0	0	6	3.5	3	3	4.5	40.5	7.8
F INSET	0	0	1.5	4	5	0	1.5	1	1	1	0.5	15.5	3.0
G Career Development	0	0	0	8.5	14.5	1	0	4.5	1	3.5	0.5	33.5	6.4
H Other Staff	0.5	1.5	1.5	0.5	5.5	10	2	11.5	1.5	2	3	39.5	7.6
I Man/Administration	2.5	2.5	1	4	6	5	2.5	3.5	4.5	7	6.5	45	8.6
J Curriculum	0.5	1.5	5.5	6.5	37	1.5	4.5	15.5	2	0	2	76.5	14.6
K Resources	1	2.5	3	2	11	3	0	1.5	0	0	0.5	24.5	4.7
L Whole School Issues	0	1	2.5	4.5	0	1	1	2	0.5	2	4	18.5	3.5
M Individual Pupils	4.0	4	1.5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	1	12	2.3
N Classes	0	2.5	4.5	1	0	2	4.5	0.5	3.5	0	4	22.5	4.3
O Other	0.5	3	7	2.5	1.5	0	5	2	0	3.5	0	25	4.8
Interview length	21	36	59	45	90	33	60	66	17	32	64	523	100

RANKINGS

Curriculum	14.6
Teaching	14.1
Job Dissatisfaction	8.9
Man / Administration	8.6
Plans / Targets	7.8
Other Staff	7.6
Career Development	6.4
Praise	5.4
Resources	4.7
Classes	4.3
Job Satisfaction	4.0
Whole School	3.5
INSET	3.0
Individuals	2.3

By contrast, JOB SATISFACTION occupied a relatively small proportion of time according to figure 6.2. On the other hand, this was mentioned as a major topic by four of the 'respondents'. As the very first heading on the proforma, appraisees may feel under pressure to write something, and, if the proforma is used to structure the interview, it is unlikely to be left out. As one 'respondent' put it:

R.6.1: I do not think you can get away from the fact that being appraised makes you feel that you have got to cough up a lot of good things that you have done, and tick them off.

One of the clearly stated intentions of the appraisal system at the study school is that the interview should 'look-ahead' to the coming year. Thus, PLANS/TARGETS emerges as a fairly important area for discussion. 'Respondents' did not mention this area specifically, although "looking back" was identified as a major topic by two.

The discussion of CLASSES occurs more frequently than INDIVIDUAL PUPILS - in fact discussion of INDIVIDUAL PUPILS did not take place at all in five of the interviews. The same emphasis is clear from the 'respondent' comments where "relationship with the tutor group" was specifically cited. Apart from GCSE, WHOLE SCHOOL ISSUES did not feature in the 'respondent' remarks, and secures a relatively small amount of time in figure 6.2.

The content categories relating to PRAISE, CAREER DEVELOPMENT, and OTHER STAFF, are middle ranking areas which give rise to a number of issues and are dealt with in greater detail later.

In general terms there is congruence between the areas identified by



'respondents' and the content/time analysis, with the qualification that the 'respondents' emphasised job dissatisfaction. There are two other points worthy of note. Firstly, the topic of "teachers' industrial action" was a common content theme in interview numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6. The explanation lies quite simply in the fact that this set of interviews was audio-taped during that period. However, it does illustrate that the content of an appraisal interview is both time dependant and influenced by events outside the school. Secondly, with the exception of interview number 9, there was no mention of pupil performance as measured by examination results, (internal or external), which may be regarded as surprising, when one considers that these are often used to reflect teacher performance.

#### Content/time Categories - Differences

Of more significance than the overall pattern shown by figure 6.2 are the differences in content between the interviews. OTHER STAFF and MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATION are the only content categories to be discussed in every interview. More commonly, we find that for any particular content category, it is hardly mentioned, if at all, in some interviews, and in others it occupies a highly significant proportion of time. For example, JOB DISSATISFACTION is not a category at all in interview numbers 3 and 9, and yet in interview 11 it accounts for 32% of the conversation. Similarly, CAREER DEVELOPMENT occupies 1 minute or less of time in 7 out of 11 interviews, and yet in interview numbers 3 and 4 it accounts for 19% and 16% of the time respectively.



Before investigating this phenomenon further it is necessary to discover whether such differences are significant in a statistical sense. Does the data represent a real, reliable difference between the proportions in the population? How can we be sure that the differences are not simply due to sampling variation?

The Chi-Square test can be used with category-variables to demonstrate that the gap between the "expected" frequencies (figure 6.3) and those which I have actually obtained (figure 6.2), is just too big to have arisen out of sampling variation alone.

$$X^2 = \text{the sum of } \frac{(O-E)^2}{E} = 483.65$$

degrees of freedom = rows - 1 x columns - 1 = 14 x 10 = 140

Reading off this result from a chi-square significance graph enables us to reject the null hypothesis of 'no difference' with a level of confidence which is greater than 99.9%. It can be concluded therefore, that the variations in content/time items discussed between the interviews is not due to chance. So what factors are responsible for these differences? The contingency table (figure 6.4) allows us to isolate those content/time categories in particular interviews which show the largest deviation of the "observed" value from the "expected" value.

In interview number 1 discussion of INDIVIDUAL PUPILS (e.g. 1.3) shows the greatest deviation from the expected value. This is partly explained by the fact that in a 'pastoral' interview a single tutor group - a relatively small number of pupils - is the natural

Figure 6.3 Expected Frequencies												
Interview No	1	2	2a	3	4	6	7	8	9	10	11	TOT
A	0.84	1.45	2.37	1.81	3.61	1.52	2.14	2.65	0.68	1.28	2.59	21
B	1.87	3.20	5.24	4.00	8.00	2.93	5.33	5.86	1.51	2.84	5.69	46.5
C	1.14	1.96	3.21	2.45	4.90	1.80	3.27	3.60	0.93	1.74	3.49	28.5
D	2.97	5.09	8.35	6.37	12.73	4.67	8.49	9.34	2.40	4.53	9.06	74
E	1.63	2.79	4.57	3.48	6.97	2.56	4.65	5.11	1.32	2.48	4.96	40.5
F	0.62	1.07	1.75	1.33	2.67	0.98	1.78	1.96	0.50	0.95	1.90	15.5
G	1.34	2.30	3.78	2.88	5.76	2.11	3.84	4.23	1.09	2.05	4.10	33.5
H	1.59	2.72	4.46	3.40	6.80	2.49	4.53	4.98	1.28	2.42	4.83	39.5
I	1.81	3.10	5.08	3.87	7.74	2.84	5.16	5.68	1.46	2.75	5.51	45
J	3.07	5.27	8.63	6.58	13.16	4.83	8.78	9.65	2.49	4.68	9.36	76.5
K	0.98	1.69	2.76	2.11	4.22	1.55	2.81	3.09	0.80	1.50	3.00	24.5
L	0.74	1.27	2.09	1.59	3.18	1.17	2.12	2.33	0.60	1.13	2.26	18.5
M	0.48	0.83	1.35	1.03	2.06	0.76	1.38	1.51	0.39	0.73	1.47	12
N	0.90	1.55	2.54	1.94	3.87	1.42	2.58	2.84	0.73	1.38	2.75	22.5
O	1.00	1.72	2.82	2.15	4.30	1.58	2.87	3.15	0.81	1.53	3.06	25
	21	36	59	45	90	33	60	66	17	32	64	523

CONTENT/TIME CATEGORIES

Figure 6.4 Contingency Table

A	5.55	1.45	1.12	1.81	0.72	3.60	1.51	0.16	0.68	5.78	0.13
B	0	0.01	0.97	4.00	5.28	0.29	0.33	2.54	1.51	0.25	38.55
C	1.14	1.96	3.37	0.86	3.10	1.61	0.46	0	0.93	1.74	1.13
D	2.16	1.87	5.62	0.12	4.69	3.72	28.33	1.43	2.40	0.23	2.17
E	0.01	0.18	10.51	0.08	6.97	2.56	0.39	0.51	2.14	0.11	0.04
F	0.62	1.07	0.04	5.36	2.03	0.98	0.92	0.47	0.50	0	1.03
G	1.34	2.30	3.78	10.97	13.26	0.58	3.84	0.02	0	1.03	3.16
H	0.75	0.55	1.96	2.47	0.25	22.65	1.41	8.54	0.04	0.07	0.69
I	0.26	0.12	3.28	0	0.39	1.64	1.37	0.84	6.33	6.57	0.18
J	2.15	2.70	1.13	0	43.19	2.30	2.09	3.54	0.10	4.68	5.79
K	C	0.39	0.02	0	10.89	1.36	2.81	0.82	0.80	1.50	2.08
L	0.74	0.06	0.68	5.33	3.18	0.02	0.59	0.05	0.17	0.67	1.34
M	25.81	12.11	0.02	0	2.06	0.76	1.38	1.51	0.39	0.07	0.15
N	0.90	0.58	1.51	0.46	3.87	0.24	1.43	1.93	10.51	1.38	0.57
O	0.25	0.95	6.20	0.66	1.82	1.58	1.58	3.15	0.81	2.54	3.06

TOTAL = 483.65

focus of discussion.

Discussion of INDIVIDUAL PUPILS (e.g. 2.4.1) was also a feature of interview number 2, although in this interview it is the proportion of time spent giving PRAISE which is most significant (e.g. 2.3.1).

Giving PRAISE occupied less time in interview number 2a, both in relative and absolute terms. In this interview PLANS AND TARGETS is the most significant content category, and relates to the discussion of the proposed library changes (e.g. 2a.9), and the plans for 'Book Week'. The category labelled OTHER also shows a fairly large deviation from the expected value, and is explained by the time spent talking about B2a's home and personal life.

In interview number 3 the category CAREER DEVELOPMENT occupied a large proportion of time, which involved discussion of B3's job prospects.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT featured strongly in interview number 4 (e.g. 4.3) also, but, as mentioned earlier, this interview was dominated by a discussion of CURRICULUM matters (e.g. 4.1) and, to a lesser extent, the associated category of RESOURCES (e.g. 4.2, 4.3). This is explained by the fact that a great deal of curriculum upheaval had taken place in the previous year in which both participants were deeply involved.

Interview 6 was permeated by a discussion of OTHER STAFF, and results from B6's prime concern with the perceived inadequacies amongst his staff (e.g. 6.2, 6.3.1, 6.9, 6.12.2).

In interview number 7 the focus of discussion was on B7's TEACHING, and her relationship with pupils in the classroom (e.g. 7.2, 7.4, 7.5, 7.7). As was pointed out in section 5.7 of Chapter Five, the pivot of this interview was undoubtedly B7 in her role as a teacher.

The largest deviation from the expected value in interview 8 concerns the category OTHER STAFF, which concentrated on a single member of staff, the department head (e.g. 8.5.7, 8.6, 8.7), whose ineffectiveness provided serious problems for B8 in carrying out her own work, sentiments shared also by A8.

It was noted in the analysis of interview number 9 that most topics were skimmed over very briefly. The contingency table shows that a discussion of CLASSES stands out as having been referred to more than would have been expected in such a very short interview. In this interview it is the discussion of the 'A' level and CSE groups, and their anticipated examination results, that is distinctive.

In interview 10 the categories MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATION and JOB SATISFACTION figure as above average content areas. This is explained by the fact that there was significant conversation about B10's temporary management position as faculty head, a role she found entirely satisfactory (e.g. 10.1, 10.6.2).

A very high deviation from the expected value was seen for the category JOB DISSATISFACTIONS in interview 11. This is due to the fairly lengthy outpourings of disaffection and despondency from B11,



and the accompanied discussion of her difficulties (e.g. 11.1, 11.5, 11.6).

## CONTENT ISSUES

### The Effect of the Proforma

The use of the proforma varied throughout the eleven interviews. In interview number 9 it was used systematically, almost as the agenda for the interview, but, as was also seen in this interview, points were rarely developed and there was a restricted coverage of content. It was used a great deal to affect the content and structure of interviews 1 and 6, and in number 10, the appraiser tended to read out remarks from the sheet and ask B10 to expand.

In other cases, for example interviews 2a, 8, and 11, it was used to get the interview going. For example, A7 asks B7 to scan through her written comments as a reminder at the beginning of the interview, and they feel obliged to return to it at the end (see 7.9), but otherwise it is used hardly at all. Scant reference appears to be made in interview number 4.

Appraiser 2/2a/7 (same person) appears to make relatively little use of the form, and this was confirmed by one of the 'respondents'. Other 'respondents' felt that the proforma did affect the structure of the interview, mentioning that it provides guidelines and 'triggers', especially for novice appraisers (as was seen with A10); and that it enables the appraiser to develop other ideas. Another

'respondent' emphasised that the proforma has a logical sequence, and that it is 'better' to start with success and the general overview. There were fewer comments about its effect on the content of the interview although one 'respondent' felt that appraisees' thoughts were naturally aligned under the headings. Another noted that it helps the appraiser to pick up the successes and observed that 'problems' tend not to be written down as much. This is interesting in the light of the content/time statistics, which show that JOB DISSATISFACTION is talked about much more than JOB SATISFACTION. The view was also expressed that some of the headings simply do not generate any discussion.

Some very perceptive remarks from one 'respondent' recognised that the proforma gives the talk a structure, and that he has "hung onto it". He went on to say that the form takes away the:

R.6.2: . . sense of inquisition - like introducing a third party - like a mediator almost.

He observed that it was as though the existence of the form enabled the appraiser to preface a question with, "Some people would say that . . . .", and reflected that the piece of paper affects the psychology of the interview.

A meeting of interested staff at the study school held on 20 July 1987 to review the recently completed 'round' of appraisal interviews, also discussed the proforma and concluded that:

a) The proforma is a reasonably well structured sheet which gives a 'fair' starting point for the discussion.

b) The form needs to be amended to include the management responsibilities that some staff ought to have as part of the checklist.

For a school wishing to set up an appraisal system, the use of a proforma, and in particular its format, would be a crucial issue. The evidence suggests that the proforma has considerable influence on the interview, although this is probably greater in respect of the way the interview is structured or conducted rather than the interview content. It is generally regarded as helpful to appraisers although there is no evidence in this research to suggest that appraisees feel the same.

The question of whether an appraiser should raise items that are not on the proforma is also of interest. 'Respondents' felt that it is legitimate to do this, although they are mainly appraisers themselves. Obviously it would depend upon the topic raised, but it should be noted that B5 cited this as a principal reason for the failure of this interview.

Who Should Determine the Content?

It could be argued that the evidence provided by the audio-taped interviews leads to the conclusion that both participants shape the content of the interview, as a result of the interplay of two forces:

a) The appraisee fills out the proforma and does most of the

actual talking.

b) The appraiser has greater influence on the structure of the interview.

However, only one 'respondent' identified the appraisee as being the person who mainly determined content, whilst two 'respondents' regarded it as a shared task - one stating that it was 'negotiated subconsciously'. The other six 'respondents' regard the appraiser as the person who, in their experience, determines interview content.

'Respondents' were more evenly split when asked about who should determine it, between those who felt the appraisee should, those who said that both participants should have the opportunity to make sure things are discussed, and those who believe it is the appraiser's responsibility to make sure the interview is satisfactory, and stop the appraisee from 'rambling' or 'going off at a tangent'.

The official emphasis on self-appraisal at the study school might lead one to think that interview content should be appraisee determined. Clearly the evidence does not support this, and there may indeed be tacit agreement that appraisers have the right to raise issues. Or there may be some blurring of the distinction between interview 'content' and interview 'control' in the minds of some appraisers, and indeed in the interview itself. An appraiser who decides to move on to another topic may be exercising a legitimate responsibility to manage the interview, but the curtailment will inevitably influence content. The question of 'Interview Control' will be considered in the section on 'Process



Issues'.

What is Appropriate?

This is a central question in that if either participant feels that inappropriate material is being discussed then the appraisal interview becomes discredited. As far as B5 was concerned the entire interview was not appropriate, with catastrophic results. In the eleven audio-taped interviews there was not a single occasion when any participant stated that he wanted to cease discussion of a particular topic. However, at times of tension, an unvoiced feeling of this nature may have existed. There can be no objective definition of appropriateness even though there may be mutually agreed, unspoken boundaries that contain the acceptable territory for discussion. It could be argued that the experience of being audio-taped would considerably reduce the likelihood of irrelevant content in the sample. Nevertheless, in the previous chapter, it was suggested that some items might be regarded as inappropriate: the suitability of the new Head of Sixth Form in interview 4 (see 4.4.1), and the retirement prospects for B8's Head of Department (see 8.7), for example.

When asked what they felt should be the major legitimate topics for appraisal interviews, the 'respondents' mentioned the familiar headings of 'Successes', 'Problems', 'Classroom Management', 'Career Development', and 'A look back and a look ahead'. One 'respondent' described appropriate topics in more personalised terms:

R.6.3: I think it should be your own happiness, contentment, about what you're doing. Whether you are at ease with what

you're doing, whether you feel that you're doing something worthwhile. Whether what you are doing is actually worthwhile - not thinking it is if it isn't. So I think it should be appraisal of how you're actually working both within your own room and as a team member.

Respondents were fairly equally divided into three groups on the question of which topics they consider inappropriate. Some felt that anything was relevant, even the appraisee's private life, especially if it's been brought up by that person. Some believed that personal topics should not be discussed unless it reflected upon professional performance. As one 'respondent' put it:

R.6.4: It's not for me to pry into private life but it may well be affecting performance. It may well be that I have to say to somebody, "Look, do you think you should be spending so much time doing this out of school when you have a job to do at school", for example.

As has already been noted, home and personal life did figure in interview 2a (e.g. 2a.1.14), but in the context of B2a's professional work. Others believed that personal matters, and getting too detailed about problems with other people, were inappropriate. One 'respondent' recalled having to put a stop to a discussion about 'personalities'.

The evidence suggests that it is not possible to be prescriptive about what should be regarded as inappropriate. By definition, it is clearly highly desirable to avoid inappropriate content, and to this end some form of tacit agreement must be reached by the participants if the interview is not to degenerate.

## Discussion of Other Staff

This potentially delicate area follows on directly from the issue of appropriateness. The content/time summary table (figure 6.2) shows that some discussion of OTHER STAFF took place in every interview. There were a number of instances when other members of staff were discussed. It has already been noted that B4 expressed the view that the new Head of Sixth Form was not suitable (4.4.1), although it becomes more relevant in the context of a position that B4 aspires to. A8 colludes in the criticism of B8's department head (8.5, 8.6). B6 spends a lot of time (10 minutes) expressing opinions about his departmental staff (e.g. 6.1.1, 6.2.1). B11 complains about the work of a year co-ordinator in Maths, and also refers to a colleague who is becoming 'distant' (11.10.3). Feedback from A11 indicated that she felt B11's comments about this person were inappropriate. The effectiveness of B9's department staff was discussed in interview number 9. Senior staff were mentioned in many interviews, but in particular numbers 2, 2a, 6 and 7, and usually in a derogatory sense - often relating to a perceived lack of recognition or support from them, although the Headteacher is the main target. One 'respondent' said that he has come across appraisees trying to gain feedback about how they are perceived by senior staff.

Of these three categories of staff - senior staff, departmental staff, and specific individuals - 'respondents' identified individuals who are department members as the most usual people for discussion.

One 'respondent' (Head of Faculty) said that it happens regularly with those who have a co-ordinating role and the second in charge of the faculty. Another Head of Faculty admitted that his second in department was a regular focus for discussion at his appraisal interview with a Deputy Head - not least because of a severe breakdown in relationship. (For example, he had not been able to have an appraisal interview with this person for many years). One 'respondent' summarised discussion of this type as:

R.6.5: I can't do my job properly because of so and so.

Another said that appraisees need a "listening ear" and added that, "you have to be careful". One 'respondent' noted that the same individual is alluded to in many interviews because he causes problems for a number of his staff whom he appraises.

Whilst it is clear that the discussion of other staff is a widespread feature of appraisal interviews, the evidence suggests that these staff are most commonly close working colleagues who have a strong influence on the professional life of the appraisee.

#### The Use of Praise

PRAISE has been selected as a content category, although its use is as much to do with the 'Process' of the interview as it is with its 'Content'. Arguably, it is more to do with the emotional stability of the interview than the completion of the task, although all of the 'respondents' recognised praise as an interview objective.

The content category summary table indicates that PRAISE was



expressed to varying degrees. It was used most in interviews 2(e.g. 2.3.1), 2a(e.g. 2a.2), and 7 (e.g. 7.13.1), where the appraiser is the same person. I shall return to this point in a later section. It also represented a significant proportion of time in interviews 8 (e.g. 8.11), and 6 (e.g. 6.5.1 and 6.13.1), although I have suggested that in the latter interview the compliments were given more as a matter of routine than as an expression of genuine feeling. By way of contrast, in some of the interviews it was completely absent in any explicit form.

All but one of the 'respondents' recalled occasions when they had been praised, but again to varying degrees. At one extreme one 'respondent' affirmed that all of his appraisals had done that, and at the other extreme it was remarked that it happened rarely. Categories of praise include compliments and thank yous, sometimes for specific work done such as a Deputy Head of Year job or as a tutor.

The importance of using the appraisal interview for this purpose was stressed by the 'respondents'. As one of them put it.

R.6.6: We don't get time sometimes to have a pat on the back. Appraisal interviews are the one opportunity that you get to sit down on a one-to-one basis and say, "Look, I have appreciated the work you've done this year".

Others felt that praise should be used to achieve some other goal, for example to boost someone's confidence or to improve the appraisee's self-image when morale is low, or, as the quotation below suggests, to have a positive influence on the event itself.

R.6.7: I think everybody's got it in their mind that this has got to be a happy and positive experience, and I think that's one of the ways of doing it.

One Head of Faculty respondent who was new to the post admitted that it was part of his strategy to use praise a great deal for his first round of interviews. He intended to be more hard hitting and focus on weaknesses the following year.

Two principal reasons emerge for the use of praise:

a) Because it is deserved - intrinsic praise.

b) Because it achieves another objective - extrinsic praise.

The following verbatim remark from one 'respondent' combines both of these motives:

R.6.8: Where praise is due it should happen. A lot of staff feel they're undervalued.

#### Job Dissatisfactions

In Chapter Two the purposes of appraisal were outlined and it was noted that it is generally accepted - and this is certainly true within the study school - that the appraisal interview should be a positive, constructive and supportive event. It has already been established that this content category is a significant area of discussion, particularly in the light of 'respondent' data. One could argue therefore, that there is an incongruence here which may be indicative of a conflict between the ideal and practice. However, it could be suggested that a more realistic perspective

would not emphasise any possible destructive effects resulting from a limited discussion of job dissatisfaction.

In fact, closer examination of the content/time summary table reveals that 44% of content classified in this category occurs in a single interview - number 11 - and even here this did not appear to have any deleterious consequences.

It is instructive to explore the nature of job dissatisfaction in more detail. The most commonly cited source of teacher frustration, both in the interviews and from 'respondents', is lack of time and the pressure that this exerts: to complete administrative work, (e.g. interview number 1), to mark pupils work (e.g. interview 11), and to prepare for lessons (e.g. interviews 2a and 11). Other significant areas of dissatisfaction as revealed by the sample interviews and 'respondents' relate to:

- a) Difficult classes - for example interviews 8 and 11.
- b) Frustrations with staff (e.g. B6 and B8).
- c) A feeling of being ignored or criticised or not appreciated by members of the senior management team.
- d) Lack of resources - primarily money (e.g. interview 2a).
- e) Timetable gripes - for example from someone who wishes to teach more sixth form.

A few other examples mentioned by only one 'respondent' in each case include: poor status for the subject (Physical Education), slow career development, and disaffection with the tutorial curriculum. One 'respondent' succinctly summarised the problem areas that teachers raise in appraisal interviews as: "Kids, colleagues, money and time".

It could be argued that these are perfectly legitimate grievances for airing at an appraisal interview because they have a direct bearing on a teacher's effectiveness. The evidence from the interviews suggests that such discussion did not have a pervasive or degenerative effect.

#### Classroom Control

R.6.9: To be honest, probably the single thing that bothers most people.

If this remark from a 'respondent' is to be believed, one might expect discipline difficulties to be a significant concern expressed in appraisal interviews. All of the 'respondents' who expressed an opinion regard this as a legitimate topic for an appraisal interview.

Yet the analysis of content in the interviews did not result in classroom control emerging as a higher level content category - which is not to say that it was not discussed. B7 talked about her problems with a fourth year (year 10) class; it was discussed in interview number 8; and in number 11 it could be regarded as the main reason for B11's disaffection and feeling of estrangement, and



was certainly not ignored by A11 (see 11.13.1). Nevertheless, for the other interviews it was not a major theme. (It could be argued that my sample of appraisees is unlikely to include many staff with severe discipline problems and that in any case they would be reluctant to disclose these on tape).

Many of the 'respondents' commented that this topic occurred rarely, if at all, although one recognised that it cropped up more frequently with young or new staff (e.g. B11?), needing re-assurance. The experience of one 'respondent' was fascinating:

R.6.10: For those with problems of control of classes - well there were three people basically. One refused to be appraised, one refused to sign the appraisal report, and the other one is in a position where I think they're past - they are unaware of the problems. They are not in a position of wanting to be helped so we kept off the problem areas.

Thus there is evidence to suggest that classroom control is not widely or openly discussed - perhaps for the following reasons. One 'respondent' observed that it depends whether the appraisee is the sort of person to admit problems. Another said that sometimes the assumption exists that classroom control is fine - something the Headteacher concurred with when stating that he tends to interview the most senior staff. One 'respondent' expressed a preference for this topic to be discussed in less formal circumstances. If the appraisee had not written about such difficulties on the proforma, should the appraiser raise the matter? The Headteacher 'respondent' felt not:

R.6.11: Certainly I think it's very wrong in an appraisal interview for the interviewer to imply that classroom discipline/control needs discussing if the interviewee isn't aware that it's something that may be talked about. Certainly

we shouldn't spring surprises.

In view of the importance generally attached to classroom control for successful teaching, and in the light of the apparent absence of widespread discussion of the topic, the reasons behind this are indeed of relevance. The final 'respondent' quotation in this section sums up the situation concisely:

R.6.12: I don't know whether what I've experienced happens in other appraisals but I think it's the one that seems to need most attention. It's either taboo from both parties because it's seen to be unprofessional to suggest there's a problem, or people live in cloud cuckoo land and aren't aware that there's a problem.

#### Career Development

The evidence relating to the importance of CAREER DEVELOPMENT as an appraisal topic is of significance. The content/time summary table reveals that more than one minute's conversation on this item took place in only four of the eleven interviews (3, 4, 8 and 10). Yet in these interviews it was an extremely important content area, particularly in interviews 3 and 4 (e.g. 4.3). The explanation for this lies in taking a 'career snapshot' of the relevant appraisees. The situation of B3/B4 is that of a young, ambitious teacher who had completed three years of a first post at the study school, with a natural inclination to discuss freely his future career possibilities. His potential for career advancement was recognised also by his two appraisers. B8 was a part-time teacher on temporary contract without a secure long term future in the study school. B10 had just experienced a one-year position as 'acting' Head of Faculty and faced the prospect of reverting to second in department - a position she had held with success for many years. Some of the

other appraisees (e.g. B11, B7) were relative newcomers. Others (e.g. B2/B2a, B9) had recently assumed positions of responsibility. It would seem therefore, that discussion of career development would depend very much on current circumstances and recent 'career history', as well as the expectations of both participants in this respect.

Almost all of the 'respondents' could recall occasions when their career development had been discussed, with one noting that it was a prime concern for some staff, and another stated his impression that "no-one was bothered".

'Respondent' views on the importance of this item for appraisal interviews varied. One stated that it was not a major purpose and another that it was not appropriate. Four 'respondents' felt that it was a very important area, with one person confiding that it made her realise that she was underselling herself and that she had the ability to go much further. Another expressed the usefulness of getting career advice as follows:

R.6.13: As far as I'm concerned, when I'm being appraised I'm looking for advice. I'm looking for pointers of things I could be doing for the next few years to fill out the experience that I've had, and make me more of a saleable item.

Other 'respondents' highlighted the problem of raising expectations in an interview which were not subsequently met. This had led some staff to feel disheartened, disenchanted, that the discussion had therefore been a waste of time, followed by a reluctance to talk about it in later interviews. As one 'respondent' put it:

R.6.14: What is at fault is a system that will allow people to think and talk about development, and offer them no carrots at the end of it.

Thus the discussion of career development poses something of a dilemma. On the one hand, the proforma invites reflection from the appraisee, the appraiser expects to talk about it, and for some appraisees the interview is seen as a good opportunity to get some career advice. On the other hand, for some appraisees, it may not be an area of interest, or relevant to their current professional needs. For others, it may represent a source of anger, antipathy, frustration, or disillusionment - the raw nerves of which an appraiser would be unwilling to touch.

#### Feedback for Appraisers

There is some evidence to suggest that appraisers use the interview to gain feedback about their own performance, or more usually, the effectiveness of their innovations.

For example, A2 was interested in whether B2 thought faculty relationships had improved; A3 enquired about how the 'progress check' system was working (3.7.1); A4 was interested in B4's views on the new 'pupil assessment' and curriculum development (4.1).

Four 'respondents' were also able to recall similar occasions, one with regard to curriculum change, another with regard to the introduction of a second foreign language. Two 'respondents' recognised that it is inevitable, for example:

R.6.15: I'm sure I must have asked how certain procedures are



going, or asked for suggestions about how we should go about this.

The use of the interview for this purpose does not appear to be commonplace however, since the other five 'respondents' stated that they could not recall examples of this nature.

Nevertheless, the question remains whether this is an acceptable objective for appraisers to pursue. Some 'respondents' felt that it was not acceptable and one observed that it would be difficult to be frank and honest if you wanted to be critical. Others felt that it was acceptable, because the initiatives are part of the environment that teachers work in. One 'respondent' felt that there is nothing wrong in giving compliments to the appraiser:

R.6.16: We all like a little pat on the back because we're all human. I'll give it to them.

There may be a helpful distinction here between feedback about the innovation itself - which may be innocuous and of relevance to the work of the appraisee; and feedback about the appraiser him/herself - which is likely to be emotionally charged though still highly relevant to the appraisee's performance.

Clearly these are dangerous waters for the appraiser to probe for a number of reasons:

a) The feedback may be negative, and not what the appraiser expected to hear.

b) The appraisee may be embarrassed and flatter the appraiser

with feedback that is not fully accurate.

c) The feedback may not be relevant to the work of the appraisee and therefore totally inappropriate.

### Summary

The evidence suggests five key GENERALITIES about the content of appraisal interviews at the study school.

1. About half of the topics discussed takes place at the level of the INDIVIDUAL with a further third at DEPARTMENT, FACULTY, or YEAR TEAM level. WHOLE SCHOOL matters are discussed for relatively short periods of time and infrequently.

2. Longer interviews tend to result in a greater number and range of topics being covered.

3. Taking all of the interviews into consideration, interview content is not dominated by a single category, although the discussion of TEACHING, CURRICULUM, and JOB DISSATISFACTIONS, emerge as leading items.

4. The interviews are distinctive for their content differences, rather than similarities, each one being a UNIQUE blend of topics for discussion.

5. The significance of each content category varies

considerably from one interview to another.

There are a number of ISSUES relating to content which are worthy of note.

1. The evidence suggests that content is determined by both participants, but with the appraiser having a greater influence than might be expected.
2. The appropriateness of the material discussed, including private life, is a matter for participant agreement - negotiated allusively.
3. Other staff are commonly discussed, particularly close colleagues who are adversely affecting the work of the appraisee.
4. Further areas of job dissatisfaction include: a lack of time and the pressure that this brings, difficulties with classes, and a lack of appreciation. Discussion of job dissatisfaction did not unduly sour the interviews.
5. Problems that appraisees have with the control of pupils are rarely discussed, and it appears that this is something of a taboo subject.
6. Discussion of career development depends upon the particular circumstances of the appraisee, and it is more likely with those hoping for a career move. For some appraisees the

discussion of this topic in the past has raised expectations which were not met, and it has become something of a 'sore point'.

7. The use of praise varies considerably, but it is used by appraisers to boost the morale of appraisees as well as communicate genuine feelings of recognition.

8. Occasionally appraisers use the interview to gain feedback on innovations, which poses a dilemma for appraisees in terms of how candid they should be.



## Chapter Seven

### GENERALITIES AND ISSUES RELATING TO PROCESS

PROCESS GENERALITIES

The quantitative summary data are displayed in three tables. Figure 7.1 collates the verbal interaction data for each interview. Figure 7.2 compares the mean scores for verbal interaction with 'Bales Norms' - these indicate the range of general normal rates for a variety of different sorts of groups in different sorts of situations.

Some useful observations can be made from the sample data of verbal interaction, but in terms of generalisation, we are more interested in the extent to which the sample data is also true of the wider population at the study school. Or in statistical terms, the process of statistical inference can be applied to sample statistics to estimate population parameters. Inference is inescapably attended by error, and the best one can do is to state the probability that a parameter lies within a range of possible values. In this section, calculations have been done at the 95% confidence interval.

The standard error (S.E.) of the mean is calculated by dividing the sample standard deviation (s.d.) by the square root of the number of observations, (in this case there are 11 interviews), and enables us to estimate a range of values for the population mean.

However, for small samples the assumptions of the normal curve are not valid, and the sample standard deviation can not be relied upon

Figure 7.1

Verbal Interaction Data Sheet	Seems Friendly	Tension Release	Agrees	POSITIVE EMOTIONAL	Gives Suggestion	Gives Opinion	Gives Information	ATTEMPTED ANSWERS	Asks for Information	Asks for Opinion	Asks for Suggestion	ATTEMPTED QUESTIONS	Disagrees	Shows Tension	Seems Unfriendly	NEGATIVE EMOTIONAL
<b>APPRAISERS</b>																
1	18.5	11	18.5	4 8	11	4	7	22	4	15	9	28	0	2	0	2
2	18.5	7.5	16	42	9.5	20	8	37	4	11	5	20	0.5	0	0	0.5
2a	16	10	13	41	8	19	5	32	5	17	4	26	0	1	0	1
3	14	2	21	37	14	12	10	36	4	19	4	27	0	0	0	0
4	5	0	18	23	13	29	10	52	4	19	1	24	1	0	0	1
6	15	1	26	42	2	32	7	41	1	14	0	15	0	2	0	2
7	14	8	14	36	4	18	10	32	3	29	1	33	0	1	0	1
8	1.5	7	13	21.5	18	27	13	58	7	12	1.5	20.5	0	0	0	0
9	4	1	20	25	13	18	15	46	7	17	2	26	0	3	0	3
10	5	9	9	23	5	16	21	42	2	22	7	31	0	4	0	4
11	10	7	13	30	15	25	10	50	2	11	3	16	1	3	0	4
Mean	11.0	5.8	16.7	33.5	10.2	20	10.5	40.7	3.9	16.9	3.4	24.2	0.2	1.4	0	1.6
s.d.	6.0	3.7	4.3	8.9	4.8	7.6	4.3	10.0	1.8	5.1	2.6	5.6	0.4	1.4	0	1.5
s.E.	1.8	1.1	1.3	2.7	1.4	2.3	1.3	3.0	0.5	1.5	0.8	1.7	0.1	0.4	0	0.4
<b>APPRAISEES</b>																
1	1	1	12	14	31	39	9	79	1	0	0	1	0	6	0	6
2	6	7	11	24	15	37	21	72	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	2
2a	3	10	6	19	7	45	20	72	7	1	0	8	0	2	0	2
3	0	0	2	2	24	45	26	95	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	2
4	2	1	6	9	19	50	18	87	0	1	0	1	1	2	0	3
6	3	1	13	17	6	57	15	78	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3
7	0.5	6	5	10	4	61.5	16	83	4	1	0	5	0	2	0	2
8	1	8	20	29	4	41	23	68	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	0
9	0	2	10	12	8	45	29	82	1	1	0	2	1	3	0	4
10	1	10	5	16	9	50	18	77	2	0	0	2	1	4	0	5
11	1	6	6	13	8	49	22	79	2	0	0	2	1	5	0	6
Mean	1.7	4.7	8.7	15.1	12.3	47.2	19.7	79.2	1.8	0.5	0.2	2.5	0.4	2.8	0	3.2
s.d.	1.5	3.7	4.9	6.8	8.4	7.2	5.3	7.9	1.9	0.5	0.37	2.1	0.45	1.6	0	1.8
s.E.	0.45	1.1	1.5	2.1	2.55	2.2	1.6	2.4	0.6	0.16	0.1	0.64	0.13	0.48	0	0.53

Figure 7.2

Summary Data for Verbal Interaction

	Bales Norms	APPRAISERS				APPRAISEES				
		Sample Mean	P - Mean Estimate	Sample Cumulative Frequencies	P - Mean Estimate	Sample Mean	P - Mean Estimate	Sample Cumulative Frequencies	P - mean Estimate	
Seems Friendly	3 - 5	11.0	7.0-15.0			1.7	0.7- 2.7			POSITIVE REACTIONS
Shows Tension Release	5 - 12	5.8	3.4- 8.2	33.5	27.5-39.4	4.7	2.3- 7.2	15.1	10.5-19.7	
Agrees	8 - 19	16.7	13.8-19.5			8.7	5.4-12.0			
Glves Suggestion	3 - 7	10.2	7.1-13.3			12.3	6.7-17.9			ATTEMPTED ANSWERS
Glves Opinion	15 - 23	20.0	14.9-25.1	40.7	34.1-47.3	47.2	42.4-52.0	79.2	73.9-84.5	
Glves Information	15 - 31	10.5	7.6-13.4			19.7	16.2-23.2			
Asks for Information	4 - 7	3.9	2.8- 5.0			1.8	0.5- 3.1			ATTEMPTED QUESTIONS
Asks for Opinion	1 - 3	16.9	13.6-20.2	24.2	20.5-27.9	0.5	0.15- 0.85	2.5	1.1- 3.9	
Asks for Suggestion	0 - 2	3.4	1.6- 5.2			0.2	0- 0.4			
Disagrees	3 - 6	0.2	0- 0.4			0.4	0.11- 0.7			NEGATIVE REACTIONS
Shows Tension	3 - 7	1.4	0.5- 2.3	1.6	0.7- 2.5	2.8	1.8 - 3.8	3.2	2.0- 4.4	
Seems Unfriendly	2 - 4	0	0			0	0			



as an estimate of the standard deviation in the population. In small samples, sample s.d. tends to under estimate population s.d. To compensate for this, the 't-distribution' is used instead. It is similar to the normal distribution in being symmetrical about a mean of zero, and bell shaped, but its dispersion varies according to the size of the sample. For a sample size of 11, and a confidence level of 95%, the population mean lies within the range of sample mean plus or minus 2.2 times the standard error.

For example, the mean score for appraisers' utterances classified as 'seems friendly' is 11.0% in the sample. We can be 95% certain that the population mean for utterances so classified lies within the range of 7.0% to 15.0%.

The third summary data table is figure 7.3, which displays the data collected on the 'Interview Analysis Forms'.

The analysis of this data enables identification of some of the distinctive features of appraiser behaviour, appraisee behaviour, and participant interaction.

#### Appraiser behaviour

With reference to figure 7.1, for appraisers in the sample, the three most important categories are 'giving opinion' (mean = 20%), 'asking for opinion' (16.9%), and 'agrees' (16.7%). Between 10% and 11% of utterances are classified as 'seems friendly', 'gives information', and 'gives suggestion'. There were hardly any instances of unfriendliness, disagreement or tension. A comparison

with the Bales Norms (figure 7.2) reveals the following characteristic aspects. Appraisers spend a relatively large proportion of time giving friendly utterances and asking for opinion, and, to a lesser extent giving suggestions. The same inferences can be made about a wider population of appraisers.

The Interview Analysis Forms (Figure 7.3) suggest that the eleven appraisers regarded themselves, and were regarded by their respective appraisees, as: flexible in their response, frank with their opinions, considerate towards the appraisee, and very interested in the appraisee's problems. There was much evidence of 'attentive listening' in the interviews, discernible only by hearing the audio-tapes. However, the appraisers tended to feel more strongly that they had exhibited these traits than the appraisees.

Most 'respondents' described appraiser behaviour in positive terms, with 'informal' as the most commonly used adjective. Other descriptors include: 'friendly', 'helpful', 'relaxed', and 'receptive'. Some comments referred to the appraiser as 'businesslike' and 'professional'. However, a few 'respondents' were able to recall appraisers as lacking in sincerity, or paying lip-service to the event, or being rather 'routine'. The existence of 'half-hearted' appraisers was noted at a meeting of interested staff at the study school on 20 July 1987. One 'respondent' described the contrast between his 'ideal' appraiser - someone who is a listener, carer, and non-threatening - with his experience of one appraiser who he said didn't care, wanted to get it over with quickly, talked about himself, and was late for the appointment. Other comments described appraisers as 'nervous' and 'searching for

Figure 7.3

Interview Analysis Forms - Summary Data

							APPRAISERS											APPRAISEES									
							1	2	2a	3	4	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	2a	3	4	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7																					
Other persons response:																											
very							7	7	6	6	6	7	7	7	6	5	6	6	7	7	6	6	5	7	7	7	4
dissatisfied																											
Appraiser Behaviour:																											
rigid							6	7	6	6	6	6	6	5	3	6	3	3	7	7	6	5	5	7	6	6	5
flexible																											
frank							1	1	1	2	1	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	4	1	2	3	5
reticent																											
considerate							1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	5	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	3
inconsiderate																											
talked too							5	3	4	4	3	5	4	2	1	4	2	4	3	4	4	6	5	4	4	2	5
much																											
little																											
interested							2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	4
disinterested																											
in appraisees																											
problems																											
problems																											
Appraiser performance:																											
very							4	6	6	5	6	6	7	6	5	6	3										
dissatisfied																											
satisfied																											
Objective achievement:																											
Completely							3	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	5										
not at all																											

things to write down' (A10 was conscious of this). It appears that the behaviour of A5 might not be quite so exceptional.

#### Appraisee Behaviour

Appraisees in the sample devote a very large proportion of utterances (79.2%) to 'attempted answers', notably 'giving opinion' (47.2%). The same emphasis could be expected from appraisees in general, with a strong probability that 'giving opinion' would account for over 40% of utterances. Instances of unfriendliness and disagreement are virtually absent. Comparison with the Bales Norms confirms the dominance of opinion giving and, to a lesser extent, giving suggestions. Attempted questions, negative reactions (except perhaps 'shows tension'), and acts classified as 'seems friendly', are all below the Bales Norms. The percentage of utterances classified as positive reactions is considerably higher than those categorised as negative reactions however.

The verbal interaction data describes what appraisees say, but tends to disguise the way they 'feel'. The qualitative analysis of the interviews and, in particular, the 'respondent' data, is much more illuminative in describing the emotional stance taken by appraisees.

For example, B9 was constrained, mechanical and dismissive with his responses (e.g. 9.9); B10 was restrained and formal; B11 was recriminative and despairing; B8 was compliant; B3/B4 was loquacious.



Whilst some 'respondents' described appraisee behaviour as friendly and open, there were far more negative comments. It appears that most appraisees are either apprehensive, nervous, cautious, 'twitchy', threatened, or defensive. One 'respondent' said:

R.7.1: I have never come out of an appraisal, where I've been appraised, feeling terribly good about it to be honest with you. Either I feel that I've gone over the top and said too much and revealed myself too much and revealed my heart, and sometimes that's not a very good thing to do, and sometimes I feel that I could have opened up and didn't.

Another identified the element of feeling subordinate, and of being 'under scrutiny'.

The reasons for this behaviour are complex, and relate to: the personalities of both participants and their relationship; the previous experiences of the appraisee; and the folklore surrounding the appraisal system. Some 'respondents' felt that appraisees: 'see it as a questioning of their professional ability', regard it as, 'a grilling session to find out what's gone wrong', or, as the Headteacher pointed out, 'we're all reluctant to discuss things which embarrass us'.

#### Differences between Appraisers and Appraisees

The evidence analysed above suggests that there are considerable differences between the verbal behaviour of appraisers and appraisees. There are statistical tests which can be applied to find out whether the difference between the two samples (appraisers and appraisees), is big enough to signify a real difference between populations. If the differences between the two means for each

verbal interaction category are large, they are more likely to come from different populations. This statistic measures the dispersion in the distribution of differences between means and is known as the 'Standard Error of the Differences Between Means' (SE-diff). We start off by assuming that there is no real difference between the verbal behaviour of appraisers and appraisees - a null hypothesis. If the difference turns out to be too big to be explained away as chance variation, then the null hypothesis is rejected, and we assume that the means are from different populations.

The 'students t test' is a calculation which expresses how many times greater the standard error of the difference between means is than the actual difference between sample means. The meaning of this value will depend upon the size of the sample. It is therefore necessary to calculate the degrees of freedom allowed by this number. These are given by:

$$df = (nx-1) + (ny-1)$$

$$df = (11-1) + (11-1) = 20$$

Although there are 12 verbal categories there were no utterances classified as 'seems unfriendly'.

The smaller the number of items in the samples, the less the degrees of freedom, and therefore the larger the value t must be in order to be classed as showing a significant difference. Thus, this technique is particularly useful when the sample size is small. The data is shown in figure 7.4.

Figure 7.4 Data on the Differences between Verbal Category Means for Appraisers and Appraisees

Verbal Category	Appraiser Mean	Appraisee Mean	Difference in sample Means	S.E. Diff	't' Value	Level of Significance %
Seems Friendly	11.0	1.7	9.3	1.85	5.0	99.9
Shows Tension Release	5.8	4.7	1.1	1.55	0.7	
Agrees	16.7	8.7	8.0	1.98	4.0	99.9
Gives Suggestion	10.2	12.3	2.1	2.90	0.7	
Gives Opinion	20.0	47.2	27.2	3.18	8.5	99.9
Gives Information	10.5	19.7	9.2	2.06	3.5	99
Asks for Information	3.9	1.8	2.1	0.78	2.7	95
Asks for Opinion	16.9	0.5	16.4	1.50	10.9	99.9
Asks for Suggestion	3.4	0.2	3.2	0.80	4.0	99.9
Disagrees	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.16	1.25	
Shows Tension	1.4	2.8	1.4	1.02	1.4	

The 'level of significance' column indicates the percentage probability that the differences between appraisers and appraisees could not have occurred by chance.

The differences are clearly very significant for some categories. 'Seems friendly', 'agrees', and all the attempted questions categories are verbal behaviours that can be associated with appraisers. 'Giving opinion' and 'giving information' are the province of the appraisee.

With regard to certain verbal behaviours we can conclude that appraisers and appraisees are drawn from different populations.

#### Similarities between Appraisers and Appraisees

Following on from the above analysis, we can identify one major area of consistency between the two groups of teachers - the relative infrequency of negative reactions, particularly acts of unfriendliness or disagreement. 'Respondent' data confirms this with most stating that they could not recall any incidents of disagreement in an appraisal interview. One 'respondent' recounted a potential disagreement over approaches to another member of staff but decided not to press the matter. As he said:

R.7.2: I don't see the appraisal interview as an opportunity for confrontation.

On the other hand, one can not doubt that negative reactions featured strongly in interview number 5.



There are two other areas of similarity. Whilst the giving of opinions dominated appraisees' verbal behaviour, it forms a very significant portion of appraisers' utterances also. The interviews contained a great deal of opinion sharing and speculation.

Secondly, positive reactions were not confined to appraisers - it represents the second largest category group for appraisees. This may help to explain why both groups appear fairly satisfied with the other's response, as shown by the answers to question on on the Interview Analysis Forms.

#### Comparison between the Interviews

The analysis of content showed that the interviews were conspicuous for their differences in subject matter. The over all pattern revealed by the Verbal Interaction Data Sheet (figure 7.1), particularly the standard deviation for each category, is that the interviews exhibit a large degree of consistency. In other words, the generalisations that have been identified apply to most of the interviews.

However, there is one variation worthy of examination. The extent to which positive emotional utterances are used appears to vary. For example, the percentage of verbal responses classified as 'seems friendly' is 5% or below for four appraisers, and 15% or above for another four. The range for 'tension release' is 11% for appraisers and 10% for appraisees. The extent of 'agreement' was as low as 2% for B3 and as high as 20% for B8.

One possible explanation lies in the notion that particular individuals have a propensity to engage in positive emotional behaviour more than others. If this is so, one might expect to find a correlation between 'seems friendly' and 'tension release' utterances, for example. However, a Spearman rank correlation coefficient of only +0.5 for appraisers is not sufficiently high to assume any statistical significance.

## PROCESS ISSUES

### Interview Control

The evidence from the case-study interviews and 'respondents' points very clearly to the appraiser, as the person who controls or manages the interview. This responsibility was not abdicated by any of the sample appraisers. A7 controlled the interview tightly, as did A2a (e.g. 2a.6.1, 2a.7.8). Even when appraisees were able to engage in the self-appraisal process very freely, for example B3/B4, the appraisers still held control of the interview. All of the 'respondents' stated that it was the appraiser who controlled the interview in their experience, although one faculty head felt that he also controlled the interview when acting as the appraisee.

Similarly, the 'respondents' agreed that it was the appraiser who should take control. There are a number of reasons for this feature of appraisal interviews.

a) Appraisees have the expectation that appraisers will take control because this person is almost always in authority over them. A strong element of dependency was noticed in interview 8. This hierarchical relationship is less pronounced in pastoral interviews however, where the Head of Year may be interviewing a tutor who is also a senior member of staff. In fact, interview number 1 was an example of this, and it was seen here that B1 exercised a fair degree of control.

b) Appraisers believe it is part of their role to 'chair' the meeting, or, as one 'respondent' remarked, "otherwise it would lose structure". Certainly A11 felt the need to keep control and prevent 'rambling' from B11.

c) Appraisees recognise point b) above and adopt the expected passive role as far as control is concerned. As one 'respondent' commented:

R.7.3: I like, as an appraisee, for them to kind of set the stage for me and set me off. As an appraiser, I like to set the stage.

#### Appraiser Questions

The chief tool of the interviewer is the question. It has already been noted that asking for the appraisee's opinion was a very important verbal interaction category, with 'attempted questions' forming something like a quarter of all verbal utterances from appraisers - although the range in the sample extended from 15% to 33%. One might expect there to be a relationship between the proportion of time spent by appraisers asking 'attempted questions',

with the proportion of time spent by appraisees giving 'attempted answers'. However, a correlation coefficient of +0.35 indicates a very weak positive correlation of no statistical significance. The same coefficient for the verbal categories 'asking for opinion' (appraisers), and 'giving opinion' (appraisers) showed a stronger positive correlation of +0.6, but this is still too low to reject a null hypothesis of 'no relationship' at the 95% confidence level.

A more profound understanding of the nature of appraiser questions can be gained by categorising them into five primary sets: closed/open, leading, probing, understanding (reflective), and supporting.

#### 1. Closed/Open Questions

'Closed' or 'limiting' questions are capable of being answered 'yes' or 'no' or very briefly, with little scope for the appraisee to influence the answer that he gives. 'Open' questions are the opposite of this and are therefore much more likely to generate response. Often it is a matter of degree: 'How happy are you with your job?' is more open than, 'Are you happy with your job?'

The evidence from the interviews is that questions were generally open, and appraisees were allowed to talk at length and without interruption. The experience of 'respondents' confirmed this, and one observed that this was especially true with experienced appraisers. However, another observed that some rather specific questions on the proforma produced 'closed' responses.



## 2. Leading Questions

Questions designed to elicit a particular response were used occasionally by appraisers (e.g. 2.6.1). Most 'respondents' could not recall examples of 'leading' questions although one remembered being asked:

R.7.4: So you're very happy with the way GCSE is going?

One 'respondent' remarked that there should be more leading questions to make the interview more purposeful, but I suspect that what he had in mind was 'probing' questions.

## 3. Probing Questions

There is ample evidence from the interviews of different types of probing question. First there are the introductory questions or 'general leads' (e.g. 1.3.3, 2a.4.1, 2a.5.1, 3.4.1, 4.4.1, 8.8.1, 10.3.1, 11.7.5), which are aimed at opening up an area that the appraiser wishes to develop. Secondly, the appraiser may wish to follow-up the 'general lead' with a 'continuation lead' (e.g. 2.1.1, 2.5.1, 2a.1.10, 2a.1.14, 4.1.5, 6.7.3, 11.5.1, 11.5.3), designed to get the appraisee to continue talking about a particular point. As the name suggests, the third group, 'amplification leads', (e.g. 2.4.2, 2a.3.4, 3.5.1, 7.10.1), are used when the appraiser wants the appraisee to give him more information by further explanation or amplification. 'Continuation leads' allow the conversation to progress in a linear sense - 'amplification leads' cause it to pause on a particular point. The idea that appraiser leads follow a sequential pattern can also be seen from the interviews, (e.g. 2a.9 and 1.1).

This categorisation is extremely helpful in explaining the questioning behaviour of appraisers. It was seen that A1's unwillingness to probe further than 'general leads' meant that he may have missed opportunities to get to the nub of issues. A9 held back over the discussion of B9's support for his staff (see 9.9). On the other hand, a more penetrating 'amplification lead' (9.6.1) produced a positive response (9.7). A2/A2a/A7 was particularly skilful at following up her questions, with the effect that it provoked a greater degree of self-awareness from her appraisees.

'Respondent' evidence suggests that appraisers find difficulty with probing too deeply, and tend to be held back by two forces. Firstly, some are reluctant because they are wary of the need to maintain the 'relational' stability of the interview and avoid conflict.

R.7.5: Researcher = Do you actually come out with it?

Respondent = I find this very difficult because if you're an appraiser and you've got a faculty to run after the interview, you have to be very careful and very diplomatic. And yet, you're sitting there knowing that person has a problem, and that it need not necessarily be the class problem or the problem of the course that's being studied. And yet, how do you get through?

Secondly, there is the fear that to penetrate an area of difficulty effectively, requires a relatively large amount of time, and as such, would result in the interview developing an over all flavour that was unsavoury. For one 'respondent' the lack of time was a major reason for limited enquiry:

R.7.6: If you give a big enough time slot, and your conversation is two-way enough, and there are some approving nods and grunts as you go along, then you actually start to

maybe get to the areas that might be contentious and might have some disagreement. You actually are prepared to go a bit deeper.

#### 4. Reflective Questions

Reflective questions are more often 'responses' which convey understanding, empathy, and acceptance, and also that the appraiser is listening 'actively', not passively. The characteristics of reflective questions include: responding to what is personal rather than abstract (2.5.5), following the other in his exploration rather than leading (3.3.1, 6.8.5), clarifying what the appraisee has said rather than telling him, (7.5.2, 9.9.3, 10.9.9). Often it involves responding to the 'feelings' implicit in what the other has said rather than the content he has talked about (3.1.1) - by being in the other person's frame of reference (6.5.5). The technique of 'reflection' is clearly crucial to appraisal interviewing because it lends itself to developing conditions of empathic understanding, rather than disconcern or distanced objectivity. In short, it involves responding not only to the words expressed but the 'music' that is heard. The sample interviews contain much evidence of 'reflective' questioning.

#### 5. Supporting Questions

The fifth category of questions was also used, (for example, 2.5.3, 2a.2.1, 2a.7.2, 2a.11.1, 3.6.1, 7.3.1, 7.6.2, 7.8.1, 7.8.3, 7.11.3, 7.11.3, 7.17.1, 8.4.1, 8.5.1, 8.10.5), but for some appraisers there was extensive use. (In the examples listed above A2, A2a and A7 are the same appraiser). 'Supporting' questions involve 'sharing' an experience or point of view. Consoling and expressing concern for the other person can be effective when the appraisee is threatened by facing himself, or his relations with others. For some of the

appraisers in the sample, appraisal interviewing is not a mechanical, impersonal activity, and they felt it necessary to express 'caring' for the appraisee, or the situation being explored. That the appraisers were generally 'considerate' is revealed also by the summary data for 'Interview Analysis Forms'.

The 'sources' of questions in an appraisal appear to lie in four areas.

- a) The proforma itself obviously generates a great deal of source material for the appraiser, and its use has already been discussed in Chapter Six.
- b) Many questions simply 'follow-on' from what has already been said, and are categorised in this analysis as 'continuation' leads and 'amplification' leads.
- c) The appraiser himself may ask his own questions - but it has been shown that this represents a small proportion.
- d) Often the appraisee transmits signals that there are particular things he would like to talk about. These cues - verbal and non verbal - can be picked up and explored by appraisers.

### Criticism

One of the most interesting aspects of the interviews is the extent to which criticism of appraisees took place. In general terms,



there was not a great deal, and the reasons for this have already been alluded to in the section on 'Probing Questions'.

However, the discussion of B4's teaching materials (4.6) represents one instance. In other cases, the criticism was implied - for example over B11's classroom effectiveness. In terms of interview 'process', the vital aspect is the effect that criticism has on the appraisee - that is, whether its impact is constructive or destructive. In interview 4, B4 became a little defensive (4.6.8) and shifted the blame elsewhere (4.6.10). The delicate discussions in interview 11 did not appear to damage the rapport. By way of complete contrast, the perceived attacks in interview 5 were a major cause of B5's alienation.

Most of the 'respondents' could not recall any examples of destructive criticism. However, two examples were described. On one occasion the appraiser's expressed dissatisfaction with classroom control and general administration led to a refusal to sign the appraisal interview 'Report' by the appraisee. In another instance, a 'respondent' felt 'vulnerable' and 'under attack' over a discussion of the effect of difficult home circumstances on her school work.

Nevertheless, examples of constructive criticism seem to have been received without antipathy. One 'respondent' was pleased that someone was interested enough to meet her problems with suggestions. Another recollection concluded with the following comment:

R.7.7: I don't recollect it ever upsetting anybody because I think I would try and put them in the position where they are

looking at the question and looking for solutions rather than my suggesting them.

One 'respondent' described his experience in the following way:

R.7.8: What they have done is to suggest different ways that I might do something or different things that I might like to do as part of my role. I think that's another way of doing constructive criticism.

A suggestion made to one 'respondent' that his 'record-keeping' was inadequate was accepted because he regarded it as valid criticism.

One Head of Faculty said that he is able to offer critical advice to his staff without causing resentment because, "I include myself in the criticism".

The evidence suggests that criticism has a constructive effect providing:

a) It is regarded as valid by the appraisee.

R.7.9: I think when anybody criticises you, you step back a little bit, and you're a little bit defensive about what you've done, but I think if you feel that the criticism that's been made of you is a fair one then you've got to accept it, and if you don't feel that it's a fair one then you've got every right to reply to it.

b) It is given in a palatable form. This would involve framing suggestions in a non-threatening way, adopting a joint problem-solving orientation (as in 2a), and ensuring that appraisees are not provoked into an aggressive reaction.

Appraiser awareness can ensure that the second criterion is met, but the impact of criticism that is not regarded as valid by the

appraisee has unpredictable consequences. Some risks may have to be taken.

### 'Passing the Buck'

One noticeable feature of the appraisal interviews is the tendency for appraisees to blame situational or contextual forces rather than themselves, when problems are being discussed. The use of defence mechanisms to avoid painful realisations is a common general phenomenon.

Interview 5 is an extreme example. A5 invoked a whole set of circumstances, and B5 accused A5! The poor quality of B4's classroom materials (4.6) was imputed to the 'model office'. Further justification made reference to poorly prepared materials from other staff. B11 found fault with just about everybody, including the 'staff handbook'. B7 had problems with a fourth year class, and she blamed the previous lesson for putting them on a 'high', and having to teach them last lesson of the day. Interestingly, further probing from A7 leads B7 to look at herself (see 7.4.1 and 7.5), but later it is A7 who refers to situational factors (7.19.3). B8's explanation for her difficulties made reference to the pupils, and having mixed ability classes.

Many 'respondents' confirmed the tendency for appraisees to blame the 'situation', but others recognised that it depends very much on who that person is. For example one said:

R.7.10: I've got people who never blame themselves for anything, and I've got people who blame themselves for

everything.

Appraisers are faced with a dilemma when they can not accept that the blame lies entirely with contextual factors. As one 'respondent' put it:

R.7.11: If you're dealing with people who don't realise they have a problem anyway and who blame their lack of success on a class or on the children or on a course or on anything but themselves, you're going to have a problem to get them to admit that they have a problem.

The final quotation in this section concisely sums up the competent appraiser's approach:

R.7.12: The job of the skilled interviewer is to change it from the buck passing to the personal introspection. But we all pass the buck if we get the chance.

In other words, the effective interviewer enables the appraisee to 'cope' with, rather than 'escape' from, the source of anxiety. It could be argued that some of the sample appraisers have displayed this talent - notably A2a and A11.

## Tension

The verbal interaction summary sheet (figure 7.1) shows that utterances classified as 'shows tension' were very infrequent, especially for appraisers. However, the Bales Norms indicate that instances were not too far removed from what might be expected. The other two categories of negative emotional behaviour were even more infrequent, but acts of 'shows tension' did take place. They are an indication that the relational stability of the interview is being upset and a signal to the participants to take remedial action,



before a downward spiral results in acts of 'disagreement ' or 'unfriendliness'.

'Tension' is usually followed by 'tension release'. The evidence suggests that this is the typical pattern of behaviour. For example, when A11 gave a rather 'cool' reaction to some of B11's excuses, they were able to laugh it off. B10 relieved the tension in a similar way when feeling uncomfortable about the discussion of her teaching style and the new approaches demanded by GCSE (10.9 and 10.10). B6's comments about his 'whole school attitude' during the period of industrial action were 'played down' by A6 (6.11).

'Respondent' comments confirm that tension tends to dissipate without conflict - although not without a 'price', usually protracted silence or some discomfort. One was able to describe incidents of tension in the following terms: 'sticky', 'a struggle', 'it hasn't flowed', 'spiky responses', a mix up in the atmospheric 'chemistry'.

Clearly tension in an appraisal interview is rare but not completely unavoidable. It represents a warning to be heeded, something not done in interview number 5.

#### Emotionally loaded remarks

Very occasionally, an emotionally charged remark, usually about another person, invites the appraiser to take sides. A2a clearly takes the side of B2a over the lack of response from senior management with regard to the information technology proposals

(2a.10). 'Respondents' were not in total agreement when asked how an appraiser should respond in such circumstances. Some emphasised that the appraiser must not take sides because it will 'store up trouble'. Others said that one should try to defuse the issue, be receptive, and encourage the appraisee to carry on, with questions like, "Tell me more about it". Others said that it is reasonable to take sides where right and wrong is clear and one made a subtle distinction when she said:

R.7.13: You can admit that the 'action' was wrong without saying that the 'person' was wrong.

Thus, it appears that this represents another delicate area for the appraiser, in which to exercise skilful handling of the interview.

#### Virgin Appraisees and Appraisers

It could be argued that the behaviour of appraisees is likely to be different in their first encounter - an observation that probably applies to new experiences of any kind. In the sample, B7, B8 and B11 were having their first appraisal interviews and tended to be the more deferential, obliging, and obsequious. 'Respondents' felt that appraisees adopted a very conscientious but prudent attitude, and that as the years pass and the relationship strengthens, they become more relaxed. One noted that first time appraisees want to please, be helpful, be positive and succeed. Another observed that he finds it easier to 'control' the interview with novice appraisees.

The impact of doing something for the first time is also felt on

appraisers - mostly noticeably in the sample with A10, who was somewhat clumsy in approach. The major disadvantage for appraisers - especially if they are new to the school - is that they will not have had enough time to develop a relationship with, and gain the respect of, the appraisee. This was one of the reasons put forward by B10 to explain the unsatisfactory experience of this interview.

#### Appraisal as Therapy

In some interviews (notably 2,2a,7,and 11), the experience of the encounter appears to have had a therapeutic, or healing effect on the appraisee. These interviews were intense, conversational, and characterised by highly positive emotional vibrations. Appraisers used 'supportive' questions and showed a high degree of concern for the other person's feelings. They were the most empathic of the appraisers. Appraisee response was good-humoured and confiding. The 'Interview Analysis Forms' for these interviews confirm that the appraisees gave their appraisers 'perfect scores' in their descriptions of their behaviour. That is, they felt very satisfied with the appraiser's response to them and regarded them as flexible, frank, considerate, and interested in their problems.

It could be suggested that such features are the hallmark of a successful interview - a sentiment also opined by a 'respondent'.

R.7.14: I feel quite strongly about the appraisal situation. I feel that we should be able to sit down and have a real heart to heart with somebody who is on the same wavelength, and knows what we're talking about, and who you can unload your burden to without it going anywhere else.

## Summary

Although each interview is a separate entity, the evidence that they provide, supported by the data from 'Interview Analysis Forms' and 'respondents', reveals a 'picture' of the typical teacher appraisal interview:

The appraiser is concerned to maintain emotional stability, make the appraisee feel at ease, and encourage responses. The appraisee is primarily self-oriented, and, in a cautious way, is concerned with presenting his own views about his work, and yet responding generously to the warmth shown by the appraiser. Both wish to avoid tension and conflict. More specific process generalities can be summarised as follows:

1. Appraisers tend to ask for opinions from appraisees, share their own views, and give positive emotional support.
2. Appraisee verbal behaviour is dominated by giving opinion. 'Respondent' evidence suggests an emotional stance that could be summarised as wary, or apprehensive, for many appraisees.
3. The verbal behaviour of appraisers and appraisees is significantly different.
4. There is little evidence of negative emotional verbal acts from either appraisers or appraisees. Incidents of overt disagreement are non-existent.



5. There are instances of exceptions to these generalities - notably interview number 5.

The analysis reveals a number of important process 'issues'.

1. As already noted, appraisers are usually very friendly and ask for the opinions of the appraisee in a relaxed and informal manner. However, occasionally, appraisees sense a lack of commitment or sincerity from appraisers.
2. Maintaining the relational stability of the interview is of prime concern, especially for appraisers. Negative emotional behaviour is rare - although occasionally instances of tension signify the need to put the interview back on an even keel.
3. Appraisers accept responsibility for 'managing' the interview.
4. Appraisers use different types of question. 'Probing' questions are used to initiate a response, although it was seen that many appraisers are reluctant to penetrate the appraisee's thoughts too deeply. 'Reflective' questions and 'supporting' questions are also employed, particularly the latter. Questions are normally phrased in as 'open' a way as possible.
5. It was seen that when criticism is presented carefully by the appraiser, and regarded as valid by the appraisee, it can have a constructive effect on the interview.

6. When difficulties are being discussed appraisees tend to use defence mechanisms and blame contextual factors rather than themselves.

7. How to respond to emotionally loaded remarks represents a delicate area for participants, especially appraisers.

8. When participating in an interview for the first time, appraisees tend to be more deferential, whilst appraisers face the disadvantage of not knowing the appraisee too well.

9. It was seen that some interviews can be of tremendous therapeutic value to appraisees.

## Chapter Eight

### UMBRELLA GENERALITIES AND ISSUES

This chapter deals with matters that can not be classified as specifically relating to 'content' or 'process'. It discusses some of the most fundamental issues, central to the understanding of the nature of behaviour in teacher appraisal interviews.

### Interview Length

Figure 8.1 includes the relevant data. The sample mean for interview length is 47.5 minutes, but the dispersion is high (s.d. = 21.3 minutes). Using these figures to estimate the population mean, we can state that this figure lies within 33.4 to 61.5 minutes at a 95% level of certainty. 'Respondent' experiences of interview length ranged from 5 minutes to 60 minutes, although only two had experienced interviews of less than 30 minutes. Some 'respondents' said that they had felt frustrated when interviews had lasted for a short period of time. The general view corroborates the sample evidence, namely that most interviews last something between half an hour to an hour.

When asked what they thought the 'ideal' length is for an appraisal interview, 'respondent' replies suggest that the consensus view is about an hour or just under.

There are a number of factors that influence the length of time participants engage in conversation:

- a) Six of the 'respondents' agreed that the length of the school



Figure 8.1 Summary Data

Interview number	Length in minutes	% of time spoken by:		Mean utterance length (secs.)	
		Appraisers	Appraisees	Appraisers	Appraisees
1	21	26	74	11	22
2	36	40	60	8	13
2a	59	32	68	8	15
3	45	18	82	11	44
4	90	26	74	23	64
6	33	18	82	8	37
7	60	27	73	9	27
8	66	61	39	13	8
9	17	41	59	11	15
10	32	41	59	12	17
11	64	52	48	25	24
mean	47.5	34.7	65.3	12.6	26.0
s.d.	21.3	13.1	12.9	5.7	15.7
S.E.	6.4	4.0	3.9	1.7	4.8
95% 2.2 S.E.	33-61	26-43	57-74	9-16	15-37

period is influential. In the study school a normal period lasts for 70 minutes. Some 'respondents' confirmed that this is the time set aside, or 'allowed' for the interview. The need to go to lunch (as in interview number 7), or teach a class, will inevitably curtail an interview that might have gone on longer. (Interview 4 - which lasted for 90 minutes - took place at the beginning of the last lesson of the day).

b) We have already seen that the proforma is used a great deal by some appraisers, and one might expect that the more fully it is completed by appraisees, the longer the interview is likely to be. Appraisees who 'wish' to have a very brief interview may be able to achieve this by writing little on the form. However, the 'respondents' views were equally divided on this possibility, with half of them saying that interview length was not influenced by the amount of information filled in on the proforma, and half of them saying that it affected length 'to an extent'.

c) Obviously the kind of person the appraisee is, the nature of his relationship with the appraiser, and their propensity to talk, will have a bearing on interview length. The rate of speech will also have an influence. Such were the type of factors mentioned by 'respondents'. As one said:

R.8.1: They vary according to the person, I find. There are people who take the interview quite seriously and will have done their homework and thought about what they're going to bring up in the interview. And then there will be others who will just say sort of, "You write it down and I'll sign it!"

d) One 'respondent' referred to the amount of input that the appraiser wishes to make as significant in influencing interview

length. Figure 8.1 shows that there were five interviews that lasted about an hour or more - numbers 4, 8, 11, 7 and 2a. It is worth noting that it is the same appraiser for interviews 4 and 8 and also for 7 and 2a.

One 'respondent' stated that it is easy to get side tracked with people you know well, and another observed that after about half an hour people begin to 'dry up'.

Obviously one can not be prescriptive about interview length. The time required will depend upon many factors, but the evidence suggests that a minimum of 30 minutes is necessary, although an 'allowance' of at least double that should be made.

One radical suggestion from a 'respondent' was that slices of time as large as half a day or a full day should be set aside, to engage in the process properly.

R.8.2: There's never really been an uninterrupted period where you could, if you like, become slightly less aware of where you are and why, which is what I think you need.

#### Relative Amount of Time Spoken

Figure 8.1 shows that in all but two of the sample interviews it was the appraisee who spoke for most of the time. 'Respondent' experience confirmed this feature, although a couple felt that it had been about equal on some occasions.

Taking appraisers separately, it can be seen that an estimate of the population mean at the 95% confidence level gives a range of 25.9%

to 43.5%. For appraisees the range is 56.7% to 73.9%. Thus we can predict that most appraisers will talk between a quarter and half of the time and appraisees between half and three-quarters of the time.

We can apply the test of significance used in an earlier section to determine whether the differences in time spoken for appraisers and appraisees are so different that we can be justified in saying that they come from separate populations.

$$\frac{t = \text{the actual difference between the sample means}}{\text{the standard error of the difference}}$$

$$\frac{t = 30.6}{5.58} = 5.48$$

$$df = (11-1) + (11-1) = 20$$

The probability that the difference could have occurred by chance is less than 0.1%. We can conclude that the difference in time spoken by appraisers and appraisees is very significant.

This contrast is to be expected in view of the emphasis on self-appraisal at the study school, where it is commonly accepted that the appraiser is there to listen and the appraisee to talk. All of the 'respondents' stated that it is the appraisee who should speak the most.

Figure 7.3 (Interview Analysis Forms) suggest that three of the sample appraisers thought they had talked too much, although an



appraisee agreed with this in only one of these interviews (number 9). A8 talked for 61% of the time and recognised this on his 'Interview Analysis Form' by scoring a 2. However, B8 thought he had neither talked too much or too little (she scored him a 4). The same 'scoring' took place for interview 11 where A11 talked for 52% of the time. Interestingly, the appraisers who thought they had talked slightly too little (A1 and A6) actually did speak for a relatively low proportion (26% and 18% respectively). It appears that appraisers' perceptions of the time spoken by themselves match up more closely with the actual proportion of time spoken, than appraisees' perceptions. The 'actual' values correlate with the 'perceived' values, at +0.8 for appraisers, (which is of statistical significance), and at +0.43 for appraisees, (which is not statistically significant). One might speculate that appraisers are more conscious of their own propensity to talk.

There may well be undesirable consequences for the interview if the appraiser talks too much. A garrulous appraiser is likely to cause resentment. The experience of one 'respondent' is pertinent to this:

R.8.3: I think a good interviewer says very little and lets the person speak. I've got recollections of being appraised and I remember leaving the room thinking that it was very unsatisfactory - that person just talked about themselves and I really didn't feel that that person was interested in what I was thinking.

The situation may also occur when the appraisee is taciturn. But as one 'respondent' remarked, reticence is simply another challenge for the proficient appraiser:

R.8.4: If I am speaking more than the interviewee, then something has gone wrong. Maybe I'm not successful in drawing them out, which is what I'm trying to do.

### Utterance Length

Data for mean utterance lengths are shown in figure 8.1. On average, the sample appraisee speeches were twice as long as those for appraisers. For appraisees an estimate of the population mean at the 95% confidence level gives an utterance length of between 15.6 and 36.6 seconds. For appraisers the population mean lies between 8.9 and 16.3 seconds.

Assuming a null hypothesis of no real difference between utterance length for appraisers and appraisees, the standard error of the difference is calculated at 5.09 seconds. Our sample difference between means is 13.4 seconds (26.0-12.6). The student's t statistic is 2.63. Degrees of freedom = 20. Thus we can reject the null hypothesis with a greater than 95% level of certainty. There are a number of factors that explain this feature of appraisal interviews.

a) Appraisers ask a lot of questions - which tend to be relatively short because 'multiple' questions are difficult to handle.

b) Appraisee response is characterised by giving answers to 'open' questions - which are capable of being answered very fully.

c) Some appraisees have a natural inclination to be expansive.

The two appraisees with the longest mean utterance lengths are B3 and B4 - the same person - who, it was noted, has a tendency to give convoluted responses.

### The Interview Structure

One might expect the structure of appraisal interviews to follow a pattern. For example, a structure with 3 stages could include.

- a) An opening - where observations are checked, data is gathered and comparisons made.
- b) A middle - where an attempt is made to achieve a development step.
- c) A summing up - where conclusions are agreed and the next step is planned.

The evidence from the sample interviews suggests that there is little 'common' structure. Each interview had its unique pattern, determined, as has already been noted, to a large extent by the proforma.

The few examples of common structure than can be observed relate mainly to the interview 'opening'. There is usually a fairly friendly beginning with an exchange of pleasantries. Interviews 3 and 6 both began with a question about how things have gone.

'Respondents' confirmed this, and recalled also a certain nervousness from participants and the use of 'ice-breakers'. One

'respondent' quoted his stock phrase:

R.8.5: Come in, sit down, how's it gone?

An element of 'checking' proforma data was employed by A10, and A7 asked B7 to remind herself of what she had written. All explained the appraisal 'procedure' at the study school. Exceptions to this pattern include interview number 9 where this kind of preamble was absent. One 'respondent' recalled appraisers who had started the interview with:

R.8.6: I hate this process. What are we going to talk about? We'd better get on with it.

The first few moments of the interview are clearly of vital importance because they help to determine what the emotional 'tone' of the entire encounter will be.

Whilst there appears to be some consistency with opening remarks, it is a short-lived period, and could not be described as an interview 'stage' as defined above. Similarly, interviews tended to end with compliments and an expression of gratitude for attending - but no more than that.

#### Differences between 'Pastoral' and 'Academic' Interviews

One very important aspect of the appraisal system at the study school is the fact that each member of staff has two interviews. One is with the relevant Head of Year to discuss the appraisee's work as a tutor (Pastoral), and the other is with the relevant Head of Faculty to deal with the appraisee's work as a subject teacher



(Academic).

In the sample, interviews 1 and 3 were 'pastoral' interviews. There are some content similarities between these two interviews in that the 'tutor group' and 'tutorial work in the classroom' were topics for discussion. However, they do not represent a distinctive pair, in relation to the other interviews, in any other respect.

Examination of all the quantitative data does not produce any other feature which is 'special' to this pair.

A more productive avenue of investigation is to compare the behaviour of the appraisee in each case with his behaviour in the academic interview, (B1 is B6, B3 is B4).

In both cases the 'academic' interviews were longer - number 6 was over half as long again as 1, number 4 was twice as long as 3. This suggests that there were more topics to cover in the 'academic' interviews. Figure 6.1 shows that the 'pastoral' interviews both had 11 topics whereas interview 6 had 15 topics and interview 4 had 24 topics.

Mean utterance lengths were longer in the 'academic' interviews - B1=22 seconds, B6=37 seconds, B3=44 seconds, B4=64 seconds. This implies that both appraisees had more to say in answer to particular questions.

It is difficult to attach any significance to this data with only two examples to study. 'Respondent' experience represents a much more useful source of evidence.

Most 'respondents' described the 'academic' interview as more important and of greater value. They were identified as longer, with more structure, classroom focussed, and with 'more to get your teeth into'. The 'pastoral' interview was described as 'nebulous', 'with little to be said', but more person oriented. One 'respondent' said that it 'touched me as a person more'. Some said that the interview was not taken seriously by the Head of Year and that the event was sometimes waived. One described typical Head of Year response as: "We know you're all right, so goodbye!"

The differences between these two types appear to relate more to the way staff 'value' the interviews, than to the behaviour of participants once the interview is underway. The Headteacher of the school believes that the dual interviews gives credence to the two management systems of the school and strengthens the role of the tutor.

The evidence points clearly to the 'pastoral' interview as the 'poor relation' of the system, but this could be because most of the 'respondents' have responsibilities on the academic side of school life. It would be more balanced therefore, to consider closely the views of the Head of Year 'respondent'.

He concurred with the general view and identified two reasons. Firstly, the Heads of Year have very large pastoral teams - usually 10 or 12 staff, and it is difficult to get to know them, particularly since pastoral work takes up a relatively small proportion of most teachers' time. In addition, these teams are

continually changing. Secondly, he drew attention to some very important differences between 'pastoral' work and 'academic' work:

R.8.7: Until quite recently the pastoral system tended to be a very unstructured, personal thing. There wasn't a tutorial curriculum that was rigidly programmed, and your ability to keep to that was never questioned - you were doing your own thing. And so there wasn't a great structure to it (the interview) and it tended to be very personal:- how you deal with children and so on. Whereas in an academic appraisal, your teaching ability, your classroom management, your exam successes, your problems with organisation, record keeping etc. tended to come out a lot more because it is a very much more structured environment. It's easier for somebody to set goals to improve in an academic appraisal than it is on a pastoral one, because the pastoral one tends to be more about personal relationships.

It would seem that the task of the Head of Year as appraiser is more difficult. He is likely to have a weaker professional relationship with the appraisee; the work of the tutor is abstruse; and the appraisee may be indifferent.

#### Appraisal as Teacher or Manager?

For most teachers their prime responsibility is classroom teaching, and one might expect the appraisal interview to converge on this activity. Other staff have significant responsibilities as managers - particularly of other teachers - and the interview may take account of this. In the sample there were four appraisees with departmental responsibilities:

B10: MPG + 'D' (formerly scale 4) - Acting Head of Maths

B6: MPG + 'C' (formerly scale 3) - Head of C.D.T.

B9: MPG + 'B' (formerly scale 2) - Head of Biology

B11: MPG + 'B' (formerly scale 2) - Head of Computing

One of the content categories shown in figure 6.2 is MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATION, and the percentage of time devoted to this group for each interview is shown below.

Interview No.	6	9	10	11	1	2	2a	3	4	7	8
%	15	26	22	19	12	7	2	9	7	4	5
mean	18.25				6.5						
s.d.	6.18				3.2						
S.E.	3.2				1.2						

It would appear that the percentage of time spent on discussion of management and administration is greater for the set of interviews which include B10, B6, B9, and B11, than the remainder.

Assuming a null hypothesis of no real difference between these two sets of appraisees, the standard error of the difference is calculated at 3.31. The sample difference is 11.75. Students t statistic is 3.54 and degrees of freedom = 9. Thus we can reject the null hypothesis with a level of certainty greater than 99%.

Interestingly, this is the only significant statistic that can be imputed from the quantitative data. In all other respects the 'management' appraisees are no different to the non-management appraisees.

However, legitimate discussion of the effectiveness of other members of the department was certainly a feature of interview 6 and to a lesser extent, interviews 9 and 10. Topics discussed at the level



of DEPARTMENT/FACULTY/YEAR team were usually more directly related to the 'management' appraisees, because they have a degree of 'responsibility' for these matters that the other appraisees do not possess.

The only 'respondent' view expressed on this issue was that there is more ground to cover when interviewing staff with administrative responsibilities, and that the interview requires more preparation.

### Interview Failure

Throughout this analysis interview 5 has been referred to as a failure. This judgement is a subjective one, based on the available evidence - not least the fact that both the 'actors' also perceived the interview in this way. The Interview Analysis Forms for this interview clearly show B5's dissatisfaction, as well as A5's perception that he did not achieve interview objectives. The reasons behind the failure of this interview have already been discussed in Chapter Five (section 5.5). It indicates that maintaining the delicate emotional equilibrium in an appraisal interview is a pre-requisite for its success.

The eleven sample interviews were largely successful, (for example, figure 7.3 shows that with the possible exception of A11, all appraisers thought that interview objectives had been achieved), but there are degrees of success. The purpose of this section is to pinpoint some of the reasons that explain why some of the sample interviews might be regarded as less successful than others. Such judgements are highly value-laden. Whilst evidence is used from the

audio-tapes to support a particular argument, the 'insider' knowledge of the researcher represents both an additional source of data, and a source of bias.

Interview number 9 was probably the least successful. It lasted for only 17 minutes and dealt with topics fleetingly. The stance of B9 was one of indifference, which made it particularly difficult for A9 to motivate him. The general conclusions to the analysis of this interview in Chapter Five (section 5.9) examine the reasons more closely.

The analysis of interview number 10 indicated that B10 was rather 'cool' in her responses. Further investigation confirmed the existence of an underlying tension, which has been discussed in detail in Chapter Five also (section 5.10).

There were a number of occasions when 'respondents' referred to the failure of interviews that they had experienced - although only when performing the role of appraisee! One person described the interview as a 'corridor chat', with no structure, no reference to the proforma, and no report written up. He concluded that it was done because it had to be done, and that it was a complete waste of time.

Clearly then, appraisal interviews are taking place in the study school which can be regarded as failures - particularly from the appraisee's point of view. However, it should be reiterated that the bulk of the evidence suggests that the vast majority of appraisal encounters are worthwhile.

There are three primary sets of forces that explain interview failure, which are inextricably intertwined:

a) The nature of the RELATIONSHIP, between appraiser and appraisee.

b) The impact of the BEHAVIOUR of participants, as they play out appraisal ROLES in the interview.

c) The effect that the PERSONALITIES of the appraiser and appraisee have on the interaction.

In fact it could be argued that these three sets of forces have a pervading and profound effect on all teacher appraisal interviews, and are now dealt with separately in greater detail.

#### The Nature of RELATIONSHIPS

The relationship between appraiser and appraisee has both a professional and a personal dimension. Both of these elements will affect the way that they relate to each other during the interview.

All of the 'respondents' agreed that a well established professional relationship is essential for the success of an interview. One stated that the event is a waste of time if the appraiser doesn't know the appraisee's work, and another remarked that it helps considerably if the appraiser has the respect of the appraisee.

In interview 10 it was seen that the participants had not had time to develop a strong professional relationship. However, one 'respondent' added that a well established working relationship could result in repetition over a period of years.

Strong professional relationships were evident in the sample interviews, particularly number 4, where there was extensive discussion of curriculum and resources. A close professional relationship was also a feature of interview 6, where the appraiser is not only B6's Head of Faculty but also a member of his department - perhaps B6 has a legitimate right to appraise A6? The possible existence of weaker professional links in 'pastoral' interviews has already been noted.

The 'respondents' were divided over the effect of existing 'personal' relationships. Some felt that it was very important and fostered 'straightforward talk'. One reflected that if you came to the interview with an inbuilt respect and liking for the appraiser, you know that what you say won't be misconstrued, because he or she knows you well enough to understand exactly what you mean.

One 'respondent' described a situation where very strong personal relationships with two of her faculty staff enabled them to admit weaknesses, and confide serious failings, because they knew that no reference to these would be made in the interview 'report'. It seems that they did not get the same 'special' treatment in the 'pastoral' interviews:

R.8.8: But you see they've gone along thinking that they can do the same with their Head of Year, and get the same kind of



watering/doctoring of the paper, and that hadn't happened - and they got hauled over the coals for it. People get wary then, of what they're going to say.

Others felt that a close personal relationship could be a handicap, or even counter-productive. The view was expressed by three of the 'respondents' that it may make it difficult to draw out appraisee failings, especially when there is a real need to be critical. As one said:

R.8.9: You may find it difficult to talk about the professional side of it, because you are too friendly on the social side.

It is possible to detect the effect of well developed personal relationships in the sample interviews, although 'insider' knowledge is helpful here. There is no doubt that the participants in interview 5 had a mutual dislike and distrust of each other. B3/B4 had considerable respect for both of his appraisers. The greatest degree of mutual affinity is evident with A2/B2, A2a/B2a.

The selection of a common pair (2/2a) enables us to compare interviews with the 'same' relationship - as far as it is possible. Some common features of both include compliments, warmth, and humour, indicative of an excellent rapport. The verbal category profiles are very similar, suggesting that the 'process' elements have remained largely the same. However, the interviews indicate subtle changes in the nature of that relationship over the intervening year. B2a is more confident and less deferential, spending less time on positive emotional utterances and more time 'giving opinions' than B2. A2a spent less time attempting answers and more time asking for opinion than the previous year. The

percentage of time spoken by the appraisee increased from 60% (B2) to 68% (B2a). More obvious differences relate to content, which is much more a function of the appraisee's professional experience over the previous year, than the nature of their relationship.

This pair were scheduled to be audio-taped a third time so that it could have been possible to trace the interviews of the same dyad over a three year period. It is interesting to note that their relationship had deteriorated to such an extent that B2/B2a refused to participate in the third appraisal interview. Further investigation revealed that this was due more to a 'personal' rift between two friends than to a 'professional' disagreement between two colleagues.

To summarise, it would seem therefore that an existing professional relationship is an essential pre-requisite for an effective appraisal interview.

The evidence is contradictory with regard to the impact of a positive personal relationship on the interview. On the one hand, its effect could be highly beneficial - helping the appraisee to feel relaxed, trusting, and divulgatory. On the other hand, it may serve to restrain appraisers from probing and reproof.

Where there is enmity or estrangement between participants then it may be very difficult to complete a successful interview.

## The Effect of ROLE

The roles adopted by the participants in an appraisal interview have a pervasive effect on the nature of interaction. The recognition of role contains the relationship within appropriate behaviours.

The 'respondents' identified three main characteristics of the role of appraisers:

- a) They are there to listen, attentively and actively, and give the appraisee the opportunity to engage in the self-appraisal process freely. In her feedback comments, A7 wrote that the role requires, 'detachment, being non-judgemental and removed from self and own ego'.
- b) They have a responsibility to motivate the appraisee to look at his or her own performance. Their choice of questions must encourage and stimulate this expression. One 'respondent' described the role of the appraiser in the following terms:

R.8.10: I think to make you look at yourself - to see yourself and to see yourself as others see you. I think that's very important because you can very often be deluded and think that things are better or worse than they are. The appraiser can in fact help you to see that correctly. They're there as a guide.

It is this aspect of the appraiser's role that requires the most skill. As one 'respondent' remarked:

R.8.11: It is meant to be self-appraisal so I guess they ought to be there to make you really take stock of yourself and to be honest about yourself. That's very hard to do, particularly if you're asking someone to be very honest about themselves. That

does require an awful lot of trust on the part of the person being interviewed I feel, and a respect for the person that they're talking to. Or at least a faith that their trust will not be misused or taken as a weakness. I suppose some people are so bad at taking stock of themselves that it must actually require a lot of skill on the appraiser's part to make them look at themselves in an objective way.

c) The role appraisers play includes giving a response. In this category, 'respondent' comments include: "Be a sounding board", "give the appraisee some idea of the standards they're working to", "recognise achievement", "set a programme for performance improvement", and after the interview is over, "take action if required".

The sample interviews suggest that appraisers are generally quite happy to 'listen' to appraisers. They are usually willing to provide a 'response', especially if it is an encouraging one. They were less adept at 'motivating' appraisees to introspect more deeply.

There are four elements of appraisee role that can be categorised from the 'respondent' data.

a) Appraisees are there to receive feedback from appraisers, and the expectation is that this should be positive and complimentary.

b) They are anticipating that the appraiser will provide professional aid - by helping them 'sort out a way forward to improve' and 'overcome weaknesses'.

c) The role includes informing your appraiser about issues that concern you, and giving your appraiser 'a feeling of your current



climate of opinion'.

d) Appraisees are supposed to engage in reflection about the work they have done. They are there to examine themselves and seek ways to improve.

It is interesting to note that 'receiving feedback' and gaining 'professional help' are essentially passive activities for the appraisee. The sample interviews show that appraisees were more commonly engaged in 'informing' and 'reflection' - usually through sharing opinions with the appraiser. The process of self-analysis was performed to varying degrees. B3/B4 adopted the self-appraisal mode naturally - B8 was unassertive, and B9 reluctant, in this respect.

From an experimental point of view, it would be desirable to examine the effect of role by changing this variable and - as far as possible - keep all the other variables constant. The closest we can come to devising such a situation is to compare the behaviour of one individual in the roles of both appraiser and appraisee. The appraisee in interview 10 is also the appraiser in interview 11. The relevant quantitative data is shown below.

	In Appraisee role (B10)	In Appraiser role (A11)
Percentage of time spoken	59%	52%
Mean utterance length	17 secs.	25 secs.
Positive Emotional Utterances	16%	30%
Attempted Answers	77%	50%

Attempted Questions	2%	16%
Negative Emotional Utterances	5%	4%

The percentage of time spent talking as an appraiser is higher than might be expected for this role. Similarly, in terms of role we might have expected the mean utterance length to be reversed.

However in respect of 'process', her verbal behaviours 'fit' the role expectations. Most importantly, the analysis of her behaviour in these interviews in sections 5.10 and 5.11 of Chapter Five points very clearly to the fact that differences in behaviour are accounted for by the particular role that was assumed in each case. The other significant explanatory factors, of course, are the facts that the 'relationships' with, and 'personalities' of, her colleagues were different, (ie. A10 is not B11).

#### The Effect of PERSONALITY

When asked to what extent the personalities of the participants influenced appraisal interviews, 'respondents' were emphatic with their affirmations of its impact. In their answers to other questions the reply was often prefaced, "Well it depends on the person, but . . ." One described a former appraiser who was 'very difficult to get close to'. Another admitted that 'personality clash' was the reason why he believed some of his staff did not want to be interviewed by him. Its effect on interviewing style and the nature of the relationship was noted by one 'respondent'

R.8.12: My interviewing approach reflects my personality very much. Obviously I modify according to whom I'm speaking. Personalities are part of the whole relationship business which is the key to it all.

Its wide-ranging influence was described in the following terms by another 'respondent':

R.8.13: Well it determines the tone of the interview, the mood that the interviewee is in when they go in to it, the extent to which they can open up to the interviewer. I think it's crucial.

Using 'insider' knowledge, descriptions of the personalities of some of the participants helps to explain the behaviour that has already been described. B3/B4 is confident, introspective and verbose. A4/A8 is analytical and task-oriented. B8 is unassuming and compliant. B9 lacks confidence. A3 is calm and efficient. B2/B2a is enthusiastic and affectionate.

By using some participants more than once it is possible to assess the extent to which similarities in the interviews can be attributed to personality.

The verbal interaction profiles for B3/B4 are very similar. The percentage of utterances in the positive emotional categories are relatively low for both interviews. His confidence and volubility were in evidence on both occasions.

A4/A8 has a dominant personality which he imprinted on both interviews. He was prepared to tackle issues with both appraisees. His own opinions were given without reluctance.

A2/A2a/A7 is an interesting person to study because her 'personality' and 'role' (as appraiser) are 'constant' for three interviews, and,

in the case of A2/A2a, her 'relationship' is with the same person. This appraiser is confident, articulate, effervescent and empathic. Of all the sample participants, her personality appeared to affect her interviews to the greatest extent. She was complimentary, and supportive in all three interviews. The proportions of utterances classified in the three positive emotional verbal categories were consistently high. She was concerned to talk about 'personal' professional concerns with both appraisees. One of the 'respondents' also has this person as her appraiser and described her in the following way:

R.8.14: J. is very, very, positive and very constructive and very supportive. She will also tell me if I've gone wrong but very clearly, and point out what I should be doing. But it's always done in such an easy way in the interview.

#### Summary

1. Most appraisal interviews last between half an hour to an hour. The duration is influenced by: the length of the school period (because it represents an 'allowance'), the amount of information on the proforma, and the propensity to talk of the participants.
2. Appraisees speak for more of the interview than appraisers, and their speeches are generally longer.
3. The structure of the interview is largely determined by the headings on the proforma and what has been written by the appraisee. Apart from pleasantries at the beginning, the



interviews do not conform to a common structure.

4. 'Academic' interviews are valued more than 'Pastoral' interviews because they are more purposeful, taken more seriously, classroom focussed, and invariably, longer. Stronger professional relationships tend to exist in 'Academic' interviews although interpersonal behaviour in the sample interviews was not distinctive to either set.

5. Those appraisees with managerial responsibilities spend more time discussing this content category, but there are no other significant differences.

6. The success of an appraisal interview depends upon the nature of the RELATIONSHIP between participants. An existing professional relationship is vital but a strong personal relationship could both benefit the interview and be a disadvantage.

7. Behaviour is also explained by the fact that participants are playing out ROLES. The role of appraiser includes listening, motivating the appraisee to self-appraise, and responding. The role of the appraisee centres primarily on reflection, and informing the appraiser, and, to a lesser extent, receiving performance feedback and professional help.

8. The PERSONALITIES of the participants will have a profound effect on the nature of interaction in an appraisal interview.

The distinction made between relationship, role, and personality is crucial, but concepts can be subsumed to reveal higher level descriptive categories. The following metaphors evoke the essence of, and 'spirit' of, the event. Analogies such as 'Parent/Child' for interview 7; 'Counsellor/Client' for interview 2; 'Teacher/Pupil' for interview 8; and 'Doctor/Patient' for interview 11; encapsulate an holistic sense of their distinctiveness.

Chapters Six, Seven and Eight offer some tentative generalities, and highlight particular features, on the nature of behaviour in teacher appraisal interviews at the study school. The significance of these results will be enhanced if they are set against the theoretical perspectives provided by the science of social psychology. This is the purpose of the next chapter.

## Chapter Nine

### THEORY REVISITED

## Chapter Nine THEORY REVISITED

Chapter Four outlined some theoretical perspectives for the study of dyads. The purpose of this chapter is to reconsider these theories in the light of the analysis of the preceding four chapters. The re-interpretation of empirical findings serves three important purposes:

- (a) It enhances our understanding of the appraisal interview behaviour already observed, described, and analysed.
- (b) It enables us to discriminate between the theories in terms of their relevance to this research.
- (c) It offers the possibility of the emergence of a dominant and integrating theoretical perspective.

The structure of this chapter follows closely that used in Chapter Four in that the theoretical perspectives provided by role theory, social psychological orientations, and interactionist perspectives, are first considered separately.

### ROLE THEORY

The analysis has pointed to widespread differences between the actions of appraisers and appraisees, and these have been summarised in the previous chapters. It was noted that appraisers engage in behaviour associated with listening, motivating, and responding;



whilst appraisees receive feedback, seek professional aid, inform appraisers, and reflect. Furthermore, the interaction process analysis revealed distinctive verbal behaviour of high statistical significance. It is the existence of these differences that suggest that 'roles' are being played out.

As would be expected, role behaviour, with variations, was evident in all of the sample interviews. For example, participants in interviews 2/2a displayed a strong 'affective' role-relationship. B3/B4 slipped into the self-appraisal role easily. In interview 6 it was suggested that A6 performed an 'expected' role (e.g. 6.13.1). In this interview A6's role conflict was at the heart of those occasions when tension surfaced. It was seen that B8 adopted a more passive role without a strong self-appraisal emphasis. In interview 10, B10 came prepared to be appraised in the role of 'classroom teacher' but A10 expected her to perform in the role of a 'Head of Faculty' being appraised. In interview 5, the enacted role of A5 - as perceived by B5 - was very different from B5's expectations.

The widespread application of the Benne and Sheats (1948) "functional roles" model provides some valuable additional descriptors, which complements the analysis in chapter 8. Figures 9.1 and 9.2 summarise the existence of predominant role behaviour.

The evidence suggests that A1, for example, played out the roles of: "opinion seeker", "recorder", "encourager", and "harmoniser", at various stages during the interview. A2a, on the other hand, displayed a wider range of roles including: "initiator-contributor", "opinion seeker", "elaborator", "energiser", "recorder",

Figure 9.1 Functional Roles for APPRAISERS

Group Task Roles	
Initiator-contributor	A2a A7 A8 A11
Information seeker	A9 A10
Opinion seeker	A11 Appraisers
Information giver	A2 A8 A9 A11
Opinion giver	A4 A7 A8 A11
Elaborator	A2a A4 A7 A8 A11
Coordinator	A6 A7
Orienter	A3
Evaluator-critic	A5
Energiser	A2 A2a A3 A4 A7 A8 A9 A11
Procedural technician	
Recorder	A11 Appraisers
Group Building and Maintenance Roles	
Encourager	A1 A2 A2a A3 A6 A7 A8 A10 A11
Harmoniser	A1 A9 A11
Compromiser	A10
Gate-keeper & expediter	A8 A9
Standard setter	
Group observer	
Follower	
Individual Roles	
Aggressor	A5
Blocker	
Recognition-seeker	
Self-confessor	A2 A2a
Playboy	
Dominator	
Help-seeker	
Special interest pleader	

Figure 9.2 Functional roles for APPRAISEES

Group Task Roles

Initiator-contributor	
Information seeker	
Opinion seeker	
Information giver	All Appraisees
Opinion giver	All Appraisees
Elaborator	B3 B7
Coordinator	
Orienter	
Evaluator-critic	
Energiser	
Procedural technician	
Recorder	

Group Building and Maintenance Roles

Encourager	B2 B2a B7 B8
Harmoniser	B9 B10
Compromiser	B1
Gate-keeper & expediter	
Standard setter	
Group observer	
Follower	B7 B8

Individual Roles

Aggressor	B5
Blocker	B5
Recognition-seeker	B1 B4 B5
Self-confessor	B7 B8 B11
Playboy	B9
Dominator	
Help-seeker	B6 B7 B11
Special interest pleader	

"encourager", and "self-confessor". Variations can also be seen amongst the roles played by appraisees. For example, B8 played out the roles of "information giver", "opinion giver", "encourager", "follower", and "self-confessor"; whilst included amongst B9's role descriptors are "harmoniser" and "playboy". Such insights can be set alongside the analysis of individual interviews in Chapter Five.

Of additional significance is the over all pattern of role behaviour that emerges. In terms of the three broad categories, appraisers are much more concerned with "task" roles, whilst appraisees account for most of the roles connected with satisfying "individual" needs. Both appraisers and appraisees were seen to perform roles concerned with "building and maintaining" the dyad.

#### The Role of Appraisers

Within the dominant category of "task" roles it can be seen that, in particular, appraisers perform characteristic roles as:

"Opinion seeker"

"Recorder"

"Energiser"

Some appraisers exhibited roles as: "elaborator", "information giver", "initiator-contributor", and "opinion giver". It could be argued that the roles of "coordinator", "orienter", and "procedural technician" are not really applicable to two person groups.



Within the "building and maintenance" category, almost all appraisers perform the "encourager" role, but most of the other roles are not in widespread evidence. The fulfilment of "individual" needs does not appear to concern most appraisers.

The Benne and Sheats roles are analogous to the Bales interaction categories (figure 9.3) and the consistency between the two models serves to re-emphasise their descriptive value.

### The Role of Appraisees

For appraisees the two dominant characteristic roles are:

"information giver" and "opinion giver", which also correspond well with the Bales data, since, "giving opinion" accounted for 47.2% of the utterances and "gives information" accounted for 19.7%. There is evidence from some interviews that appraisees perform roles as "help-seeker", "self-confessor" and "recognition seeker".

The applicability of the Benne and Sheats model, and its congruence with verbal interaction analysis, suggests that role theory offers a very powerful construct for understanding behaviour in the teacher appraisal interview. It offers an explanation for CONSISTENCY in patterns of behaviour amongst both the appraiser role and the appraisee role. To illustrate this point the "role-relationship" between the two participants can be analysed in terms of two dimensions:

Dominance/Dependency

Love/Hate (degree of affiliation)

Figure 9.3 Comparison of Benne and Sheats Functional Roles with  
Bales Interaction Categories

Verbal category	BALES		BENNE AND SHEATS	
	%	domain	Role	role category
giving opinion	20	task	opinion giver	task
asking opinion	16.9	task	opinion seeker	task
agrees	16.7	+ve emot.	encourager	maint.
seems friendly	11.0	+ve emot.	encourager	maint.
gives information	10.5	task	information giver	task
gives suggestion	10.2	task	initiator	task

The types of behaviours associated with these two dimensions are shown in figure 9.4. The application of this analytical framework to the sample interviews reveals the pattern illustrated in figure 9.5.

This analysis emphasises the importance of affiliative behaviour from both groups, but particularly appraisers. The exception, of course, is interview number 5, where there was disapproval, criticism, evasion, and resistance. Behaviour in the 'dominance/dependency' dimension is much more varied. A1 and A10 were predominantly obliging, obsequious, and unassertive. A2/A2a/A7 and A4/A8 were more assertive. B1/B6 tended to be assertive, whilst B8 and B11 were dependent. Leary (1955), has suggested that behaviour on the 'affiliation dimension' provokes similar behaviour: liking provokes liking, hostility provokes hostility. However, he postulates that behaviour on the dominance/dependency dimension provokes its complement: being submissive provokes leadership behaviour, managing and directing provoke obedience. The behaviour of the participants as they are presented above tends to support both of these generalisations.

#### SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

Reference to personality factors pervaded the analysis of the sample interviews and its importance was stressed by respondents.

As far as Mann's (1959) personality "characteristics" are concerned the classification system offers some insights. "Approach" tendencies were shown by most participants but particularly: A1, B1,

Figure 9.4 Dimensions of Role-Relationship

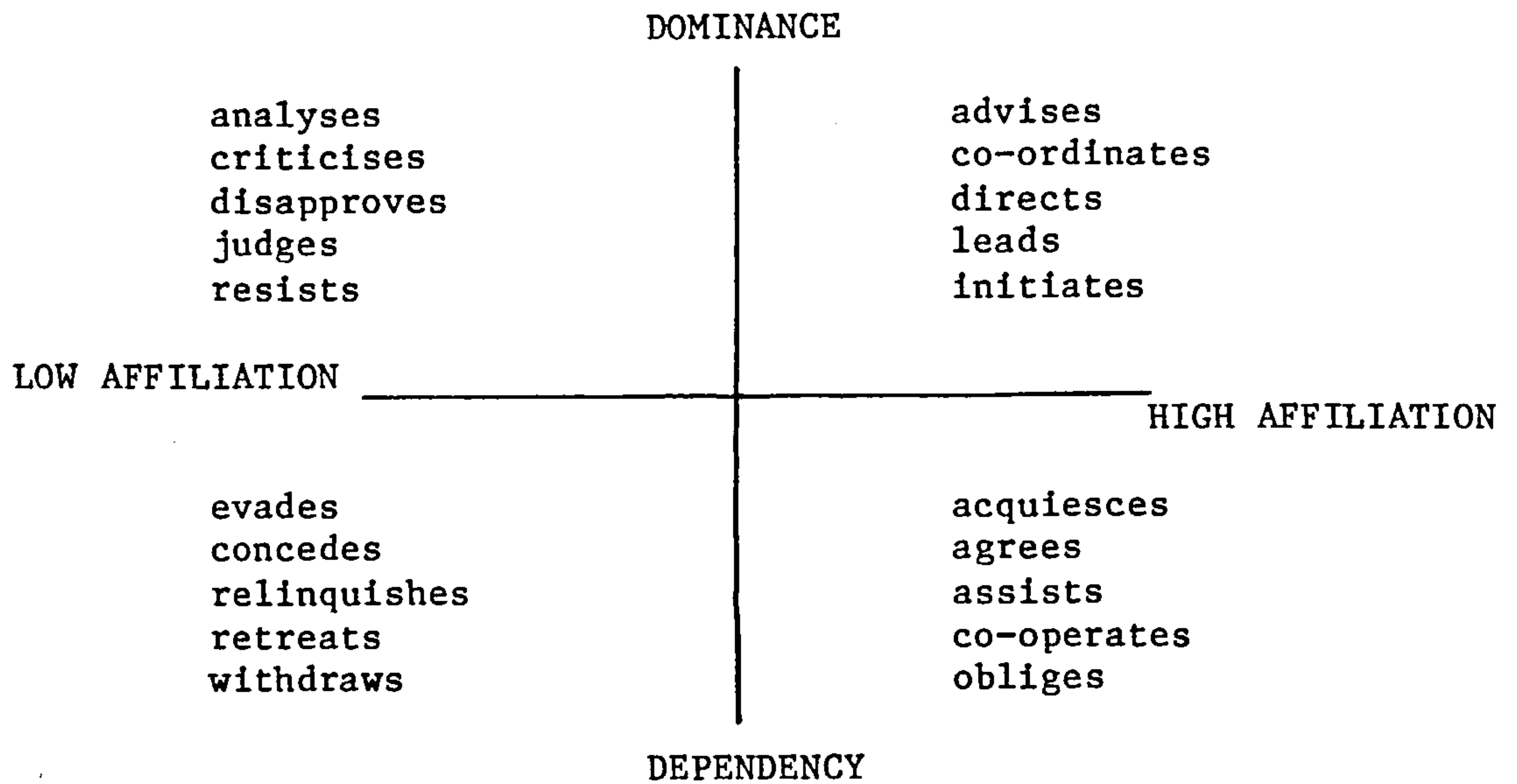
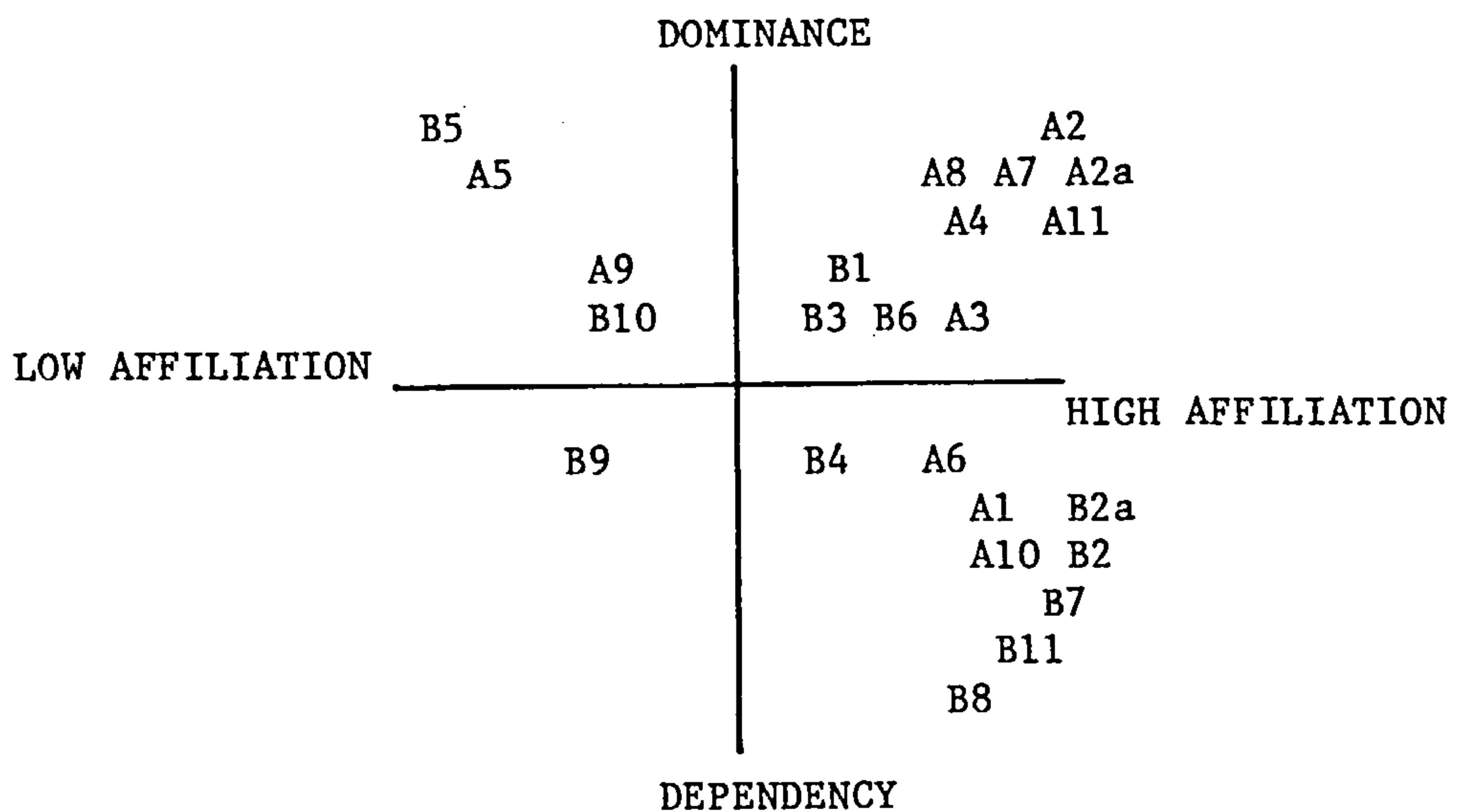


Figure 9.5 Application of Dimensions of Role-Relationship to Sample Interviews





A2/A2a (e.g. 2.3.1, 2a.2, 2a.12), B2/B2a, A7, B7, A10, and A11.

"Avoidance" tendencies were largely absent, (interview 5 excepted).

The characteristics relating to "social sensitivity" were also much in evidence, especially by A2/A2a (2a.11.1), B2a, A3 (3.3.1), A9 and A11. None of the participants could be described as

"authoritarian", although the assertiveness of B1, B3/B4, B6 (who spent 86% of the time talking), and B7, indicate "ascendant" tendencies in these people. "Dependability" was a characteristic seen in the behaviour of A3 and A11. The degree of "emotional stability" amongst participants was high, indicating that most were well "adjusted" to the task. Only B11 showed elements of "anxiety".

It is clear from this summary that particular personality characteristics are not associated exclusively with either appraisers or appraisees. One can conclude that whilst role theory helps to explain SIMILARITY in behaviour, personality factors may help to explain the DIFFERENCES. Personality variations help to account for those individual idiosyncracies which makes each actor's behaviour unique.

In terms of Schutz's Theory of Interpersonal Relations (F.I.R.O.), one could argue that there was a high degree of compatibility between A2/A2a and B2/B2a, and A7 and B7 in terms of all three dimensions - "inclusion", "control", and "affection". On the other hand, participants in interview number 9 were incompatible in terms of "inclusion", and it was largely absent also in interview 10. The theory may be most helpful in terms of using the concept of compatibility to explain the degree of success in the interview.

Indeed, in a general sense, the significance of personality may lie in the effect it has on the "outcome" of the appraisal interview. It is worth exploring this idea further.

Driskell, Hogan, and Salas (1987), maintain that the relationship between personality and group performance depends upon the "type" of the task involved. They identify six personality trait dimensions, (drawn from factor analysis research), - figure 9.6; and a compatible task typology, - figure 9.7.

The implication that certain types of task require specific behaviours can be applied to the teacher appraisal interview.

It could be postulated that the appraisal interview task "profile" is primarily "social", with its emphasis on supportive, personal contact. Driskell, Hogan, and Salas, have argued that this type of task is positively related to the traits of "adjustment", "sociability", and "likeability"; with the other three traits having an average, but not predictive, relationship.

To a lesser extent the appraisal interview is an "intellectual/analytic" task, which is positively related to the traits of "adjustment", "intellectance", and "ambition". It is also "manipulative/persuasive" to a smaller degree, which is positively related to the traits of "adjustment", "ambition", and "likeability". By relating the empirical evidence from the work of Driskell, Hogan, and Salas to the nature of the appraisal interview task, it could be inferred that the key personality traits for effective performance are:

Figure 9.6 Trait Dimensions (after Driskell, Hogan, and Salas, 1987)

Trait	Descriptors
INTELLECTANCE	bright/creative v dull/unimaginative
ADJUSTMENT	stable/self-confident v anxious/moody
AMBITION	achievement oriented v apathetic/unassertive
PRUDENCE	conforming v impulsive /risk-taking
SOCIABILITY	outgoing/affiliative v shy/introverted
LIKEABILITY	warm/friendly v cold/critical

Figure 9.7 'Task' Classification (after Driskell, Hogan, and Salas, 1987)

Task	Descriptors
MECHANICAL/TECHNICAL	operation, maintenance of things
INTELLECTUAL/ANALYTIC	generation, exploration, of knowledge
IMAGINATIVE/AESTHETIC	invention or expression of products
SOCIAL	training, assisting, or serving others
MANIPULATIVE/PERSUASIVE	organisation or motivation of others
LOGICAL/PRECISION	performance of explicit, routine tasks

ADJUSTMENT - An appraisal interview requires mutually co-ordinated behaviour and therefore poorly adjusted persons (for example, those insensitive to interactional cues), disrupt interaction.' This is what defines "group" as contrasted with "individual" tasks.

LIKEABILITY - This is important for tasks based on interaction and requiring social competence and interpersonal tact.

The claim that: because different behaviours are required in different task situations, then different personality types will perform better in different task groups, can be applied more directly to the evidence from the sample interviews.

The effect of personality was alluded to in Chapter Eight, particularly with regard to B3/B4, A4/A8, and A2/A2a/A7. As was stated then, the evidence for personality differences is based upon "insider" knowledge and perception only, and is therefore a highly subjective assessment of these traits. Clearly, this is a major problem for the validity of this analysis, and in the following table therefore (figure 9.8), the personality trait is indicated in only those cases where it exists to a very high degree.

The outcome of interviews 2, 2a, and 7 can be attributed, at least in part, to the affiliative behaviour ("sociability") of all participants, and the purposefulness ("ambition"), and creativity ("intellectance"), of A2/A2a/A7.



Figure 9.8 Personality Trait Dimensions of Sample Appraisers and Appraisees

	INT	ADJ	AMB	PRU	SOC	LIK
	*	***	*		*	***
A1						
B1					/	
A2/2a	/		/		/	
B2/2a					/	/
A3		/				
B3					/	
A4		/	/			
B4					/	
A5			/			
B5	/		/		/	
A6					/	
B6		/		/		
A7	/		/		/	
B7					/	
A8		/	/			
B8						/
A9						
B9						
A10		/		/		
B10				/		
A11				/		
B11				/		

Legend:

In the context of an appraisal interview

\*\*\* = Key Personality Traits

\* = Some relationship between trait and task performance

Interviews 3 and 4 produced similar outcomes because:

- (a) both appraisers provided the stability and confidence ("adjustment") for,

- (b) the same appraisee to expand easily ("sociability") on his concerns.

The failure of interview 5 can be partly attributed to the personality clash between the two participants, although this is not readily apparent from figure 9.8. If B5's personality (B5 is also A2/A2a/A7), contributed to positive outcomes as an appraiser, the same characteristics of drive ("ambition") and intellect had negative consequences in interview number 5. Clearly the behaviour of B5 must be explained with reference to other factors and circumstances - as was done in section 5.5 of Chapter Five.

The absence of dominant, or relevant, personality traits for A1, A9, B9, B10, A11, and B11, suggest that the behaviour of participants in these interviews is less a function of personality than of other factors. Given that the personality derivations deal with ideal types, and that the typology is deliberately simplified, this theory can not fully explain the complexity of behaviour in an appraisal interview. One can not assume however, that personality forces are not operating in these encounters. Over all, the evidence from the sample interviews supports the thesis that, in the context of the task, the outcomes are influenced by the personality traits of the participants.

## INTERACTIONIST PERSPECTIVES

Early ideas in Exchange Theory conceived of interaction as a chain of responses, each interactor reacting to the other's most recent social act. There is considerable evidence from the sample interviews that a stimulus-response model applies. For example, if X makes a remark about a particular topic, Y will probably reply by speaking on the same theme. If X asks a question, Y will probably answer it. Examples of this process from the sample interviews are numerous, (1.2, 2.1, 2a.6, 3.7, 4.1, 6.8, 7.9, 8.8, 9.3, 10.3, 11.4).

The idea that actors seek to maximise rewards and minimise costs is also evident. The participants in interviews 2, 2a, and 7 rewarded each other a great deal with compliments, (e.g. 7.13.1 and 7.14.1). Consecutive compliments occurred in interview 6 (e.g. 6.8). Quotations 8.11 and 11.2 are examples also. A1 sought to reduce costs by avoiding difficult areas and the process was repeated (e.g. 1.1.2 and 1.2.3). B4 corrected a perceived misrepresentation in an attempt to reduce costs, (4.7.5). Costs were commonly reduced by acts of tension release, (e.g. 10.10.1), or by avoidance, (e.g. 11.1.11 and 11.1.13).

Two different processes could be responsible for "rewarding" behaviour - "imitation" and "reciprocity". Imitation is likely to occur in the form of concurrence. For example, B2's agreement with A2 that faculty relationships have improved is a form of imitation (2.6).

Reciprocity is defined as follows: If X does something for Y, Y usually responds by the performance of some equivalent act for X.

This sequence differs from imitation in that:

- (a) The reciprocity is not necessarily similar to the original, but is equivalent in reward value, and
- (b) Reciprocity is not an immediate unthinking response, but is carefully calculated and follows after an appropriate interval of time.

Sahlins (1965), maintains that reciprocity can be "altruistic" when there is a very close relationship, and "negative" in a hostile encounter. Homans (1961), has suggested that there is less reciprocation by the person of lower status - either because he lacks the resources to do so, or because he responds by deference. As a general observation this would seem to apply to appraisees.

There is some evidence that the opinions of participants result from "social comparison", (e.g. 3.2.1, 4.5, 7.3.1, 7.6.1, 11.12.1, 11.13.1). B6's views of his department are comparative (6.7.4), and B10 compared A10 with her usual appraiser. However, on the whole Festinger's theory has limited applicability.

The need to maintain a positive self-concept was implicit throughout the interviews. Some appraisers (e.g. A2, A3, and A4), sought recognition or feedback for their own innovations. None of the appraisees admitted failure, and some avoided or shifted responsibility (e.g. 11.5.6). Apart from this, self-attention theory provides few additional insights.

Strategies of "Self Presentation" were identifiable and Goffman's (1967) classification system can be applied to the observed



behaviour of appraisees in particular. Most commonly, appraisees used strategies of "self-promotion", especially B1, B3/B4 and B9. Strategies of "supplication" were used by B6, over staffing problems (6.8), by B8 and by B11 (11.5.2 and 11.10). B8 used strategies of "ingratiation". However, the theory has limited value in explaining the behaviour of appraisers.

#### Stability of Interaction in the Appraisal Interview

Perhaps the most significant feature of the interaction process in the sample interviews, (number 5 excepted), is the fact that participants would discover a STABLE pattern of behaviour that was satisfactory to both.

A system is said to be in equilibrium if it remains in a steady state and if deviations are met with forces to restore conditions to normal. This is analogous to energy devoted to group "maintenance" in Group Syntality Theory. Examples of this kind of corrective action were found in the sample interviews (e.g. 1.3, 6.11, and 9.9). For equilibrium to develop, behaviour modifications will need to take place - especially by the person most dependent on the relationship, or by the person who is the most flexible, or by the person with the larger repertoire of social skills. When two incompatible people meet, they face the problem of how to reconcile their respective personalities and styles of interaction - something not resolved in interview 5.

Exchange theory does not give a complete account of social interaction in dyads. Some social behaviour is governed by factors

in addition to the seeking of rewards from others. The interviews illustrate that the key to relationship building and sustaining communication is how each participant adjusts to the other. Co-ordination of behaviour is necessary for successful interaction. Each person must have his own definition of the relationship in the interview. He must be aware of, and prepared to adjust to, how he thinks the other person defines the relationship - termed the "metaperspective" by Wilmot (1975).

There are a number of ways in which co-ordination is necessary. There must be consensus over content, and in many interviews the proforma was a useful aid in establishing common ground. Expectations with regard to appraiser and appraisee roles must be met. The affective relationship must be appropriate - if two people seek different degrees of intimacy, there will be awkwardness, and a compromise must be adopted. There must also be co-ordination with regard to the timing of speech - smooth synchronisation, few interruptions, and no long silences. Each response of X must be followed by an "appropriate" response from Y - questions should lead to answers, jokes to laughter, for example.

Interaction may take place when these conditions are satisfied. The ensuing state of stability can be described at two levels of analysis:

(a) There are the details of timing and synchronising of speech and the accompanying bodily movements.

(b) There are also the higher order units such as: "dominance",

"intimacy", and "role-relationship".

A social relationship is usually thought of in terms of the second level, but it is negotiated by moves at the first level.

For the case-study interviews stability was achieved as a result of behaviour CONFORMITY. In other words, the appraisal pair, like all other social groups, form NORMS. These shared patterns of behaviour are adopted by group members in the appraisal episode because this enables them to attain group goals and satisfy interpersonal needs. The most appropriate language for describing a particular pattern of behaviour derives from the concept of ROLE.

#### INTERACTION AS DRAMA - AN INTEGRATING THEORY

Based on some of the ideas outlined by Mangham (1978), in this section I shall seek to demonstrate the value of adopting a dramaturgical perspective on behaviour in the appraisal interview. The extension of the theatre metaphor to the key features of the appraisal event unifies and integrates the research findings.

Essential to this model is a concept of the individual as a "performer", whose activities may be seen as so managed as to present a "self" or "character" in the context of a "scene", and in response to "cues" provided by the other. Behaviour is depicted as an "actor's" "rehearsal" and "enactment" of his performance in the light of his "repertoire" for that situation.

The performance of actors in the appraisal "play" is determined by:

(a) The "PRODUCER'S INSTRUCTIONS". Guidance on the objectives of appraisal and hints on how to conduct the interview are provided by the Headteacher at the case study school. These are shown as Appendix 4.

(b) "PERFORMANCES OF FELLOW ACTORS". Complementarity of role or the "interlocking" of roles is inevitable in the successful interview. The expected, perceived, and enacted appraiser and appraisee roles are intertwined. The analogies of: parent/child (interview 7), counsellor/client (interview 2), teacher/pupil (interview 8), and doctor/patient (interview 11), are indicative of this interdependence.

(c) "SCRIPTS - SITUATIONAL, PERSONAL, AND STRATEGIC." A great deal of interaction in the appraisal encounter passes innocuously and raises few questions about the meaning of exchanges. These routine or "situational" scripts can be defined as relatively predetermined and stereotyped sequences of interaction which are called into play by particular cues or circumstances. The first example is typical of many dyadic encounters - including, of course, the appraisal interview.

X: Good morning John. Do come in. Take a seat.

Y: Sorry I'm a bit late - got caught up with Johnson on the stairs.

X: Oh him! By the way, is your lad out of hospital yet?

Y: He's due out on Thursday. The operation was a complete success.

X: Great! Well, we'd better make a start.



In the script above each actor assumes and enacts clearly defined roles within the confines of the anticipated sequence of events. The same process can be observed in a hypothetical sequence from an appraisal interview.

X: How are the worksheets on "energy" coming along?

Y: Er, I'm afraid they're not ready yet.

X: Weren't they due last week!? The year nine team have been asking for them!

Y: I'll get them done by next Friday, or so - Scout's honour.

X: (laughing) Ah well! Better late than never. Let's move on and take a look at . .

This extract could take place in any teacher appraisal interview, and there is a pattern to this interaction also. One aspect of the script relates to the handling of tension - which is followed by an act of tension release. We have seen that the avoidance of open conflict and the maintenance of emotional stability is a predictable norm in the appraisal interview. The participants respond automatically, because the "situation" has prescribed behaviours.

"Personal" scripts consist of performances which lead to satisfaction on the part of the main actor, and are sought to be acted out in many situations, including the appraisal interview. They derive from self presentation drives, and personality traits, and are therefore idiosyncratic.

"Strategic" scripts are used to elicit certain behaviours from the other. Typical of the appraisal situation would be a deliberately chosen "type" of question - for example a probing question. The actor is conscious of what he is trying to achieve through his

actions.

In an appraisal interview interaction proceeds like the unfolding of a drama, although the implied linear development (stimulus-response), is too simplified given the transactional nature of communication. In fact each person is simultaneously sending and receiving messages and therefore each person is constantly affecting and affected by, the other. What the actor does is a product of:

(a) His interpretations of the behaviour of the other.

(b) The meanings of the scene (the situational script).

(c) The roles he has in his repertoire and is disposed to play (his personal script).

(d) Any adopted strategic script.

The performance of each actor is programmed by these factors and consequently we may expect both similarities, and differences, in performance. However, the essence of the role perspective is that it assumes, as does the theatre, that performances result from the social prescriptions and behaviour of others, and that individual differences in performance are within the framework created by these factors.

The idea that role performance consists of an actor conforming behaviourally to expectations communicated by others is recognised

elsewhere:

Generically, role behaviour refers to the recurring action of an individual, appropriately interrelated with the repetitive activities of others so as to yield a predictable outcome. The set of interdependent behaviours comprise a social system or subsystem, a stable collective pattern in which people play their parts.

Katz and Kahn (1966)

The dramaturgical model accepts the notion that the person as a social actor seeks to bring into play personal scripts as well as respond to situational scripts. But the significance of the concept of the "strategic script" is to stress:

(a) the ability of the actor to both determine what purposes he wishes to achieve and how best to achieve them, (as playwright); and

(b) to cast his own role and that of his fellow actor by managing the impression he makes, (as director).

One could argue that the foregoing dramaturgical analysis can be reduced to saying quite simply that behaviour in the appraisal interview is a function of both personality and role, with the interaction process forming the interface between the two. Or in Lewinian terms: Behaviour is a function of both the person and the environment -  $B = f(P, E)$ . Although these statements are valid in terms of the empirical findings of this research, they can not adequately convey the reciprocal negotiation of meaning and identities in the appraisal encounter - or evoke a more profound and satisfying sense of what Argyle (1969) has termed the "feeling of

explanation".

. . . critics of the dramaturgical perspective err in supposing that the drama of social life is a mere metaphor; it is rather the stuff and fibre of social relations, and the very substance of the sociological perspective invites consideration in dramatistic terms . . .

Perinbanayagam (1974)

## Summary

In the light of the findings of the previous four chapters, this chapter has critically assessed the value of the theoretical perspectives outlined in chapter 4.

It has been shown that role theory provides a very powerful language for describing participant behaviour. In particular, the role categories from the Benne and Sheats model help to describe the key differences between the roles of appraiser and appraisee.

The usefulness of the various social psychological theories varies considerably, although Mann's personality characteristics are helpful in explaining idiosyncratic behaviour. It has been suggested that personality factors have a significant impact on the outcome of an appraisal interview.

Interaction theories have drawn attention to the pervading influence of homeostasis - the tendency for equilibrium to be maintained in an appraisal encounter.

Most importantly, this pattern of role conformity and stable interaction is integrated by a dramaturgical perspective.



## Chapter Ten

### RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

## Chapter Ten RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

This study has been primarily concerned with describing and explaining the nature of interaction in teacher appraisal interviews. This research has implications both in terms of:

- a) How teachers prepare themselves to participate effectively in appraisal interviews.
- b) The kind of behaviour that is likely to lead to a successful encounter.

Therefore this chapter will concentrate on two main areas:

1. TRAINING for appraisal interviewing.
2. The identification of GOOD PRACTICE in the appraisal interview.

### THE NEED FOR TRAINING

The need for training in the skills of appraisal interviewing is universally recognised, both inside and outside the education service. Writing in "Industrial Engineering", Buzzotta and Lefton (1979), maintain that the appraisal interview is frequently defective because of poor planning or conduct:

The sombre fact is that unless managers do effective appraisal interviews, no part of a company's appraisal system works right. The appraisal interview is pivotal.

They maintain that appraisal interviews are complex, demanding, and hard to do, and that appraisers need to learn a wide array of insights and skills. Kikoski and Litterer (1983), draw a similar conclusion:

For the central source of difficulty still remains. This occurs when the manager sits down to review face-to-face his subordinate's performance. The appraisal interview itself is the Achilles' heel of the entire process.

Fisher and Thomas (1982), contend that the undesirable consequences of appraisal can be lessened by improved training of appraisers.

Starling (1982), outlines how appraisal training can remedy failings arising from: conflicting objectives, evaluation errors, feedback delay, and organisational system effects. Kaye and Krantz (1982), argue that employees, as well as managers, require training in performance appraisal.

In an early study of factors relating to the effectiveness of a performance appraisal program, Meyer and Walker (1961), found that the "best" predictor of whether or not the appraisee took constructive action based on his performance appraisal was how well his manager had handled the appraisal discussion. Similarly, an investigation by Burke and Wilcox (1969), found that the way superiors handled the interview influenced subordinate reactions to both the interview itself as well as their motivations to improve subsequent job performance.

Thus the research evidence outside of the education service suggests that the most influential element in the system is the interview, and management's success or failure in handling the interview can

consequently make or mar the whole appraisal procedure.

One of the general conclusions of the study by the Suffolk Education Department (1985), was that training will be required for all personnel involved:

All that has been said about the implementation and nature of the appraisal process points to the fact that significant skills (observational, interpretative, interviewing), are required of appraisers. These skills are different in nature from the skills acquired by teachers for interviewing pupils or parents. Without adequate training of appraisers, an appraisal system will fail or be counterproductive.

A further study by the Suffolk Education Department (1987), re-iterated the importance of training. Similar conclusions were drawn by the six pilot authorities, for example:

All designated appraisers will require training in the ideas and skills of appraisal interviewing.

Cumbria Education Department (1987)

The Report of the National Steering Group on the School Teacher Appraisal Pilot Study (DES 1989), also emphasised the need to train both appraisers and appraisees for their roles, (paragraph 74). Appendix 5 of the same report recommends that appraisees should be trained to participate effectively in appraisal interviews, and that appraisers should be given training to help them develop the practical and interpersonal skills needed to fulfill their role as interviewers.

Unfortunately, at the present time - and, as 'respondent' comments have indicated, this is certainly true of the study school - most appraisers conduct interviews without any formal training at all.



The DES paper "Quality in Schools: Evaluation and Appraisal" (1985), found that there was no training in appraisal and interviewing techniques in any of the schools visited that had appraisal schemes, and yet paragraph 146 of the same report noted that training is necessary for all those involved in evaluation and appraisal, particularly in interviewing. The Suffolk Report (1985), found that the little amount of training that had taken place had been of the "do-it-yourself" variety. The paucity of training is recognised also by Turner (1982):

The problem with line appraisal is not that it is not a good thing per se but that it calls for special skills in the manager in which he is likely to have had no training, and he will quite likely possess such skills in limited form or at unsatisfactory levels.

The evidence of this research does not deny the necessity for training. Many of the case-study interviews were successful encounters because years of "on-the-job" experience acted as a substitute for more formal training for many of the participants. However, one could argue that training in interview skills may have improved the performance in the interview of some teachers in the sample. For example, A1 could benefit from a more penetrating approach. Interview number 9 should have been less superficial. As the first appraisal interview he had conducted, it was clear that A10 lacked the confidence that training would have helped to supply. Perhaps the attitudes of B11 would have been more objective, and B8 more assertive, if they had been trained in the role of appraisees. Most significantly, would the catastrophic events of interview number 5 have been avoided if both participants had benefitted from interpersonal skills training? There is evidence from the 'respondent' data also to suggest that the experience of some staff

at the study school would have been more satisfactory, if training for their appraisers had made them more dynamic and effective interviewers.

Like most other research in social interaction, this work is carried out in the hope that it may be possible to make interpersonal behaviour in the appraisal interview more effective. One of the main applications of this research is that it highlights a need to train people in four areas of social competence:

1. Clarifying Aims - participants need training in goal identification. For example, appraisers in the study school need to be conscious that their aim is to foster self-appraisal from the appraisee. B8 was not aware of this and interview 9 lacked a clear objective.
2. Perceptual - training should make participants aware of the non-verbal and verbal elements of interaction. People must be taught to interpret cues correctly and to adopt the role of the other person during interaction, something most effectively achieved by A2/A2a/A7.
3. Response Patterns - the effective appraisal participant is highly rewarding to the other. The interaction needs synchronising in terms of floor apportionment, and other dimensions, such as emotional mood and intimacy.
4. Self-confidence and Self-presentation - participants must be trained to present themselves clearly to the other, without concealment, exaggeration, or embarrassment, (one of the weaknesses of A10).

Without training in these areas it is possible that appraisal interviews will produce confrontation, tension, or at best, a rather shallow experience that will breed disappointment and disillusionment, especially if repeated over successive years.

Furthermore, training in interviewing skills has to be supplemented with in-service training related to other aspects of appraisal, for example information to staff about policy and procedures, and

training in classroom observation techniques. Without the necessary back-up, appraisal could be sterile rather than creative. It could all too easily become routine and mechanical, as it was in interviews 9 and 1 for example and as it is in some industrial companies which, while committed to appraisal in principle, admit to its limitations in practice.

The resource implications of training are massive and could easily be described as prohibitive.

A national system will call for a level of in-service provision on a scale that years of cut-back will make it difficult to meet.

Cave and Cave (1985)

The Suffolk study (1985), estimated that the appraisal process would consume 8 to 12 hours per teacher per annum, with a minimum of three days for appraisal skills training. Stewart (1977), advocates a two day training course for managers as the minimum. The National Steering Group Report (DES 1989), calculates that appraisal would cost 40 million pounds a year to run, needing additional teacher time equivalent to 1,828 full-time teachers. Clearly, an investment in appraisal on this scale must include adequate training if a great deal of time and money is to be used efficiently.

This study into behaviour in the teacher appraisal interview has shown that the two participants are acting out roles which are best understood through the dramaturgical perspective as outlined in Chapter Nine. If the "play" is handled properly, the interview becomes a powerful technique for performance improvement.

Improperly handled, the interview becomes a source of frustration or resentment. Therefore we must learn to control the interaction

between appraiser and appraisee in order that the purposes of appraisal can be achieved. This in turn requires that we have some insights into the dynamics of the interaction. In order to be a successful interviewer, a person must first understand these dynamics - in particular the importance of personality factors, role, and relationship. Appraisers and appraisees need training both to appreciate the significance of these forces, and to acquire the specific techniques of successful interviewing. Training courses must develop understanding and teach skills.

#### TRAINING TECHNIQUES

In the previous section, I argued, firstly, that there is a vital need to provide training in appraisal interview skills, and secondly, that increased awareness of the appraisal interviewing process results in improved interactive skill. There is often a need to overcome an inbuilt resistance to interpersonal skills training, which derives from the popular belief that anyone can conduct an appraisal interview because it is just like having a chat! It is vital to convince teachers that interview training is both necessary and possible. The heavy dependence upon proforma in the case-study interviews may indicate that these are used as substitutes for the exercise of really effective skills.

Training courses in such skills are rare, and managers often resent an implication of personal inadequacy when training is suggested. In practice, the less the managers are trained in the appropriate skills, the more they need support from forms and procedure. The more skilled they are the more likely it is that a performance appraisal procedure will work and be acceptable despite inadequacy of forms.

Randell (1973)



There are a number of techniques available for training in appraisal interview skills. "Educational" methods include: lectures followed by discussion, reading and self-instruction, and instructional video-tapes. A number of such packages are now commercially available, typically containing video programmes plus a training manual. Such training materials may be most useful where the trainees are relative strangers.

In certain circumstances, training "On the Job" methods are ideal, but they require repeated performances utilising a learning process of trial and error with feedback. This approach is unsuitable for appraisal interview training because: there are too few opportunities to practice, no-one is available to provide feedback, and, as a result, many appraisers may persist in the use of inappropriate social techniques, for example interviews 5 and 9. Uniquely perhaps to the appraisal encounter,- because the event is confidential,- there are no role models to imitate. Nevertheless, whilst it is undesirable to be "thrown in at the deep end", there is much to be learned from experiencing the real event:

The would be swimmer must eventually get into the water and try it; in learning to interview, the same icy plunge into the situation is demanded.

Beveridge (1975)

Role play and simulation were found to be very effective methods for training in the skills of appraisal interviewing by the Suffolk (1987) team, and they are extensively used in industry also, (for example Hofmeyr, 1980). Trainees can practice the part they are going to play and are given some kind of feedback on their performance. Closed circuit television, (Lidstone 1980), is helpful in allowing trainers to illustrate the difference between how the

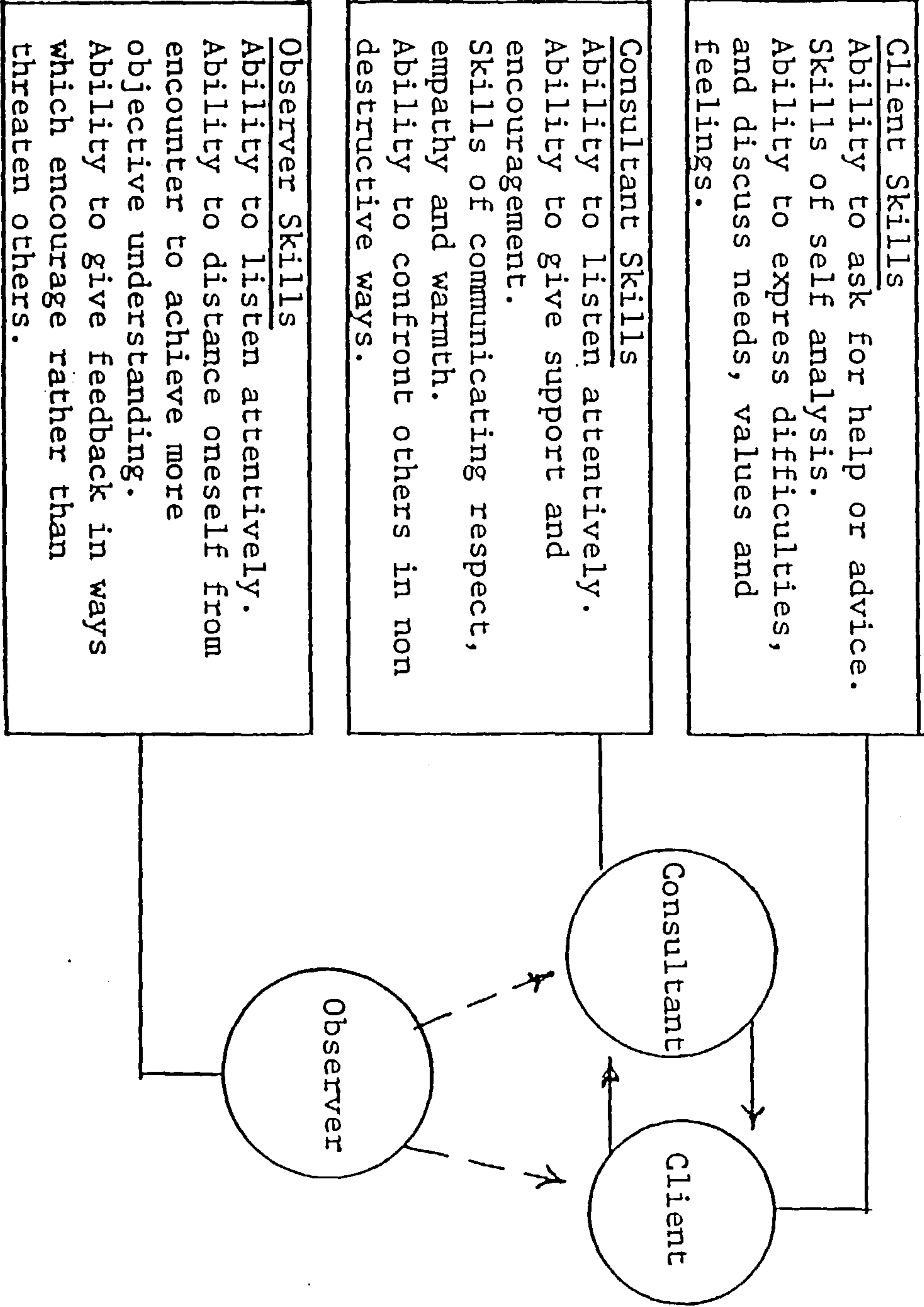
appraiser sees himself/herself and how others see the appraiser. Burke (1979), describes how feedback can be used to improve managers' appraisal skills by providing them with information about the way subordinates perceive their behaviour in the appraisal interview. Appraisers may benefit from playing the role of appraisee. A commonly used role-reversal technique is the "power-spectrum" role play, where trainees meet in pairs in the roles of appraiser and appraisee. A third of those acting as appraisers take this role in a coercive authoritarian way, a third are permissive or democratic, and a third give all the power to the appraisee.

Role playing, especially with audio or video recordings, brings the usually spontaneous non verbal aspects of behaviour under conscious control, and helps with the verbal labelling of behaviour. Such techniques can result in increased sensitivity to interpersonal behaviour and interaction processes and it can also lead to changes in self-perception.

Gould (1984), outlines how practical appraisal simulations have allowed appraisers to focus on real issues, listen, respond in a flexible way, and establish confidence; whilst appraisees learned to ask questions and be self-critical.

One variation makes use of the peer counselling development group, (Elliott-Kemp 1981), where three colleagues subscribe not only to the need for others to help in their professional development, but also to the need for a method which affirms the autonomy of the individual. Figure 10.1 illustrates the group of skills which are

Figure 10.1 Peer Counselling Development Group Skills (after Elliott-Kemp, 1981)



of direct relevance to the skills of appraisal interviewing both as appraisee (client) and appraiser (consultant).

With this approach too, it is extremely productive to rotate roles - because it is as playing the role of appraisee that participants understand most vividly how the behaviour of the appraiser can influence the success, or otherwise, of the interview.

Of course, all managers are appraised and do appraisals, yet it is in their role as appraisee that they are more permeable to information about how the appraisal system works. This is why training to be appraised is such a success, in terms of both attitude change and skill improvement.

Stewart (1977)

Training through role play is not without its difficulties. Trainees may think it silly and not take it seriously. They may over-dramatise performances, or play to the gallery of other trainees. And of course, what one learns has to be applied to the real life situation. A "one-off" training session, and consequent disinterest, is not likely to lead to the establishment of confident attitudes or effective appraisal. Whilst hypothetical problems can be addressed in simulated appraisal interviews, unless the participants have an existing professional relationship, it is virtually impossible to reproduce anything like the kind of real interaction that takes place. Thus, role play methods are most suitable for school based training, where trainees know each other and their work well. Much appraisal training is skill-focussed but training in attitudes is equally important. Paisey and Paisey (1988), refer to this distinction by identifying training needs for "technical" elements such as good documentation, and interviewing skills; and "ideological" factors which concerns values and



attitudes.

The direction of courses in appraisal interviewing techniques requires skill and sensitivity. Course leaders should encourage trainees to give feedback which is:

1. Balanced - good and bad performance should be remarked upon.
2. Detailed - general statements are of less help than comments on particular interchanges.
3. Objective - an observer should emphasise what he saw, not how he evaluated it.

Based upon their experience of piloting training material on more than 70 occasions in 1986 in a number of LEAs, the Suffolk team suggested that a training package for appraisers should be designed to enhance:

Listening

Questioning

Analysing

Summarising

Clarifying

Giving and Receiving Feedback

Problem Solving

Target Setting

There is evidence that training plans to improve staff appraisal in industry do actually result in performance improvement. A study by Allinson (1977), asked managers to compare their pre-training and post-training interviewing performances. He found that a role

playing approach to performance appraisal interview training not only led to improvement in almost every aspect of appraisal interviewing, but also in trainees' understanding of the role of performance appraisal.

Whichever training technique is utilised, the identification of appropriate behaviour is a key task for the trainer. The most significant application of this research is in describing what constitutes "good practice" in the appraisal interview. This is the purpose of the next section.

#### GOOD PRACTICE IN THE TEACHER APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

The assumption that anyone can sit down for a chat with a teacher about his or her job, avoid the pitfalls and make it a purposeful and worthwhile event, is mistaken, and not supported by this research. If there were a simple procedure to apply in order to conduct an effective appraisal interview, the whole activity would be a manipulative operation rather than a complex human skill. Many staff in schools are very experienced in the skills of interviewing - with pupils and parents. However, the wholesale application of generic interviewing techniques is inappropriate:

The appraisal interview is not like any other interview the manager is likely to have to conduct. It is private, usually, and the parties may be bound in confidence not to reveal what went on. It does not - should not - have the flavour of evaluation, which selection interviews, and dismissal interviews, often have.

Stewart (1977)

This section of Chapter Ten is divided into four parts of sequentially narrowing focus. The first deals with some PRE-CONDITIONS which provide the appropriate context for successful appraisal interviewing. The second part describes the effective behavioural CHARACTERISTICS of appraisal interview participants. Thirdly, I will outline the specific process SKILLS which participants will need. A final section will address some of the key ISSUES in the identification of good practice. Given that the responsibility for conducting the interview lies with appraisers, it will become apparent that much of the advice is directed towards them.

## PRE-CONDITIONS

### 1. Climate Setting

The National Steering Group Report (1989), concluded that there is a need to take positive steps to establish a favourable climate for appraisal, including:

Commitment from the LEA

Wide consultation on the LEA scheme

Implementing appraisal in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect

Associating appraisal with the implementation of the National Curriculum and the preparation of school development plans

Part of setting the right climate is the realisation that appraisal takes place within an organisational context. If an effective appraisal interview is more likely to take place in a climate of trust and respect, the appraiser must cultivate this atmosphere

throughout the whole year - it can not be conjured up for one occasion.

The appraisal interview is not something that is simply plugged in at a certain time. To be effective, the appraisal interview must be viewed as a continuation of professional and personal relationships between the teacher and evaluator.

Haefele (1981)

One fundamental aspect of climate setting is that the concept of appraisee "ownership" must be established. One 'respondent' described the staff view of appraisal at the study school as:

R.10.1: . . . something the hierarchy impose upon us quite frankly. If they (the staff) had their way, there wouldn't be any.

On the other hand, as outlined in chapter two, the scheme has evolved over the last 12 years essentially through voluntary participation in a climate which has allowed it to survive.

The importance of participation in decision making in the development of a teacher appraisal scheme was noted in Chapter Two. In a study of 454 teachers employed in two school districts located in western New York State, Alutto and Belasco (1972), demonstrated a positive relationship between attitudinal militancy and decisional deprivation.

## 2. A Recognition of the Dimensions of Appraisal Interviews

### a) Affective

The case-study interviews have revealed that an appraisal encounter is often charged with emotion. Appraisees may be apprehensive and wary, the tension of appraisers may be interpreted as coldness, and



a downward emotional spiral may develop. It is an essential pre-condition that participants are aware of the fact that the appraisal interview involves not only verbal and non-verbal communication of facts and ideas, but of attitudes and feelings as well.

#### b) Functional

A recognition from participants that they are acting out 'roles' and that the interview requires a performance in line with expectations has an over-arching significance. The details of this perspective have been discussed fully in the previous chapter.

#### c) Relational

The nature of the relationship between appraiser and appraisee has been alluded to in earlier chapters. It has been noted that the quality of the relationship is of crucial importance. Interaction is most effective when the appraisee feels acknowledged as a person, (as in interview 7), that his behaviours are accepted, and that he has been listened to and understood. As one 'respondent' observed:

R.10.2: Whatever one says depends on how much trust they have in the appraisers and how they are approaching them.

### 3. Planning and Follow Up

There is a great deal of work to be done before the interview takes place. The appraiser should review all records and gather all the facts about past performance and future developments. Classroom observation may be a major aspect of this preparation. Both participants must understand how the appraisal system operates and

have undergone training.

Clearly the appraiser must have considerable knowledge about the job done by the appraisee. One frequently expressed complaint from appraisees is that appraisers simply do not know enough about the work they do, perhaps because they have not taken the trouble to find out, or, as Stewart (1977) and Randell (1974) both suggest, because they lack the confidence to tackle discussion of a job description which is not their own.

They appear to think that they are expected to be omniscient and perhaps to know more about their subordinates' jobs than the subordinates themselves. This may be a reason why many managers are not as effective as they should be at appraisal interviewing.

Randell (1974)

Planning also entails taking care to get the environment for the interview right - a private place, office perhaps, without interruptions or telephone calls, and plenty of time to complete the interview. Proforma need to be completed well in advance and the appraisee given adequate notice of the meeting. Guidance on such matters in the study school is included in Appendix 4.

One of the most frequently expressed criticisms of appraisal systems is that little is done to follow up issues raised during the interview. Clearly, appraisers must write up any reports carefully, honestly and in consultation with the appraisee. Commitments to action must be honoured by both participants.

## CHARACTERISTICS

The case-study interviews reveal typical behavioural characteristics of appraisers and appraisees and these have been analysed in detail in Chapter Seven. The extent to which this generalised behaviour represents "good practice" is a matter of subjective evaluation. The evidence of the "Interview Analysis Forms" suggests that - with the exception of interview 5 - participants were largely satisfied with the performance of the other. Whilst recognising that it is difficult to judge whether appraisal interviews are successful, one 'respondent' said of the study school:

R.10.3: I certainly feel that people have come out of appraisal interviews having looked at their range of responsibilities within the faculty, and had some kind of input, and some kind of effect on what they were going to be doing in terms of changing their responsibilities.

Thus, if value judgements are attached to the findings of earlier chapters, and summarised briefly, effective appraiser characteristics include an ability to make the appraisee feel at ease and to promote responses, (e.g. A11). Appraisers encourage self-reflection in a non-threatening way and give positive emotional support, (e.g. A3, A2/A2a/A7). Probing and reflective questioning are used to good effect. They control the interview with a loose rein, (e.g. A3). Effective appraisee behaviour emphasises a willingness to self-appraise frankly and openly, (e.g. B3/B4), reciprocate the warmth shown by the appraiser, (e.g. B2/B2a), and avoid tension.

Other research evidence provides a highly complementary set of characteristics.

Buzzotta and Lefton (1979), describe four interview "types" based upon two dimensions of interaction: dominance-submission and hostility-warmth. Their "ideal", (termed "Q4"), type has the following characteristics:

- a) It is candid and aims to produce real insight into how the appraisee works.
- b) It is balanced - dealing with both strengths and weaknesses.
- c) It aims at appraisee self-awareness.
- d) It is a joint activity.
- e) It seeks commitment and ownership from the appraisee.
- f) It is flexible and aims to tailor discussion to the needs of the individual.
- g) It results in a detailed plan for appraisee improvement.

Drawing upon the work of Solem (1960), and others, Burke and Wilcox (1969), describe four characteristics of effective performance review and development interviews:

- a) High levels of appraisee talking. In Chapter Eight I noted that appraisers tend to talk for less than 40% of the time - a critical figure in a study by Solem (1960), who found that when superiors do less talking, there was greater mutual understanding and a more positive response from both participants to the interview.
- b) A helpful and constructive attitude on the part of the appraiser. Solem (1960), found that when the appraiser used positive motivation, (listening, recognising good performance, taking the attitude of helper), this was associated with more effective interview outcomes, (e.g. interviews 2, 2a, 7, 11).
- c) A focus on solving the problems which hamper current job performance of the appraisee, with the assistance of the appraiser, (e.g. All).
- d) Mutual setting of specific goals for the appraisee, as opposed to no discussion or reference only to general goals, was found to result in twice as much performance improvement.



The National Steering Group Report (1989), states that the setting of professional targets for future action is an important part of the appraisal interview, (paragraph 43).

Miles (1971) asserts that effective group behaviour results from the appraiser:

- a) Exercising leadership.
- b) Paying attention to both getting the job done and maintaining emotional stability. This is analogous to management styles which distinguish "task orientation" and "person orientation"; and also to the functional roles of "Group Task" and "Group Building and Maintenance" (Benne and Sheats, 1948).
- c) Using process skills such as: sensing or noticing; diagnosing or understanding; and taking action or doing something to help. These have been labelled, "clarification", "understanding", and "action" by Chelms (1988).

The results of a study by Nemeroff and Wexley (1979), demonstrate the necessity for appraisers to adopt a constructive attitude, the behavioural components of which are identified as: being friendly, ending the interview on a positive note, and praising, characteristics seen in interviews 2, 2a, 6, 7, and 8. They found that supportive appraiser behaviour is related to the appraisee's satisfaction with the interview and interviewer, and his motivation to improve.

The Suffolk (1987) study identifies the good appraiser as someone who:

- a) Asks more questions, especially when looking for proposals and solutions that come from the appraisee.
- b) Summarises more often.
- c) Tests understanding of what has been said and agreed more often.
- d) Is less likely to give information about his views and opinions, yet more likely to give information about his inner feelings.

## SKILLS

A typology of appraisees developed by Chelms (1988), contained two categories. The first group contained staff who were either of the "ideal" type, (clear, open), or "stuck" type, (experiencing frustration or with some kind of temporary problem). He argues that for both types it is possible to make progress in an appraisal interview. The second group contained staff for whom conducting an appraisal interview could be extremely arduous, and were labelled as either "obstructive" or "terminal".

Similarly, at a meeting of appraisers in the study school, three types of interviewee were identified:

1. "Keen" - often new staff, e.g. B2 and B7.
2. "Accepting" - often middle ranking staff and/or established in post
3. "Going through the motions" - some well established, stable staff, e.g. B1, B6, B9.

The last category presents some difficulty for the appraisal interviewer. Figure 10.2 shows a completed (?) proforma for one member of staff at the study school, which illustrates the "challenge" of appraising this person.

Appraisees who are: over-talkative, (B3/B4?), impatient, dogmatic, destructive, indifferent, (B9), unco-operative or inattentive, for example, require appraisers with a very high level of interpersonal skill, and many other qualities besides. Dealing with difficult topics such as criticism of other members of staff needs tact, impartiality, and objectivity.

Figure 10.2 Proforma for One Appraisee

Staff Appraisal (Academic)

This form is a guide and assistance to the appraisal process.

Please complete Sections A and B.

Use of Section C is voluntary, but the self appraisal may help you and your interviewer.

Interviewers may use the "Comments" column or write a separate report.

This form should be passed to interviewers at least 24 hours before the interview.

After the report is written it should be signed by both parties and passed to . . . . .

SELF APPRAISAL

INTERVIEWER'S COMMENTS

Section A - The year past:

1. Successes.

TROUBLE FREE EXAMINATION SEASON

2. Satisfactions.

AS ABOVE

3. Problems.

ONLY THOSE "OF THE HOUR"

4. Dissatisfactions.

LIFE

5. Frustrations.

AS ABOVE

Section B - The year ahead:

6. Plans and targets.

TO RETIRE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

7. Help and support sought.

NONE THAT HAVE WORKED

8. Longer term ideas and plans.

SEE 6. ABOVE

Under more "typical" conditions the appraisal interviewer is dealing with an individual who may feel vulnerable, (e.g. B11), and in consequence hide or exaggerate his performance rather than discuss it openly and honestly. As already mentioned, this emphasises the need for the appraiser to create and maintain a relationship of confidence. The appraiser's reputation for discretion and fair-mindedness precedes him. Even when these pre-conditions are satisfied they will not make the person a competent interviewer - he needs skills as well as integrity.

Twenty years ago the theoretical content of a course on interviewing typically consisted of a list of some 10 or 15 tips on interviewing. This "maxims" approach would be based upon generalised personal experience of what makes an interview go well. As references to other sources have shown, knowledge is accumulating on the relationship between interviewer behaviour and interviewee response. The purpose of this section is to itemise the key process skills which must be employed to ensure the success of an appraisal interview.

### 1. Establishing Rapport

Obviously at the beginning of the interview it is necessary to put the appraisee at ease and establish rapport. Whilst informality is important, 'respondent' evidence from the study school suggests that the appraisal interview is not always treated as a professional occasion. As far as the appraisee is concerned, lack of appreciation of the importance of showing that one has a sense of



occasion can devalue the event. An air of enforced joviality and false good humour on the appraiser's part may increase rather than decrease apprehension.

## 2. Exercising control

The evidence of this research has shown that it is the appraiser who takes responsibility for managing the interview. This is widely regarded as perfectly appropriate:

It is the interviewer's responsibility to give shape to the interview.

Beveridge (1975)

However, there is a delicate balance between controlling and dominating, and the appraiser must adapt his behaviour to suit the situation. The chief variations in control are to be found in:

- a) The relative amount of talking done by each participant.
- b) The tempo of the interview.
- c) The degree of freedom allowed to the appraisee.
- d) The degree to which digressions are allowed.
- e) Exercising "focus" skill.

The focus skill helps the appraiser decide which of five potential areas of organisational problems merit attention, and thereby achieve the best results. The five focus areas are: 'person', 'problem', 'other', 'context', and 'self'. A situation where an appraisee comes to complain about the appraisal process provides an example:

a) A PERSON focus concentrates upon the appraisee. The person's first name, or the pronoun, "You", can help the appraiser.

"John, you sound frustrated about this appraisal business."

b) A PROBLEM focus deals with the issue at hand while trying to get more information about it.

"John, could you tell me exactly what the problem with the appraisal procedure is?"

c) The OTHER focus highlights another person.

"How do your colleagues feel about the system?"

d) With a CONTEXT focus we are concerned with how the problem relates to the entire organisational system.

"John, do you realise that all teachers are using the same procedures?"

e) In a SELF focus, attention is concentrated upon the appraiser.

"John, I'd like to know if I said, or did anything in this appraisal process to upset you so much?"

### 3. Attending Skills

The most important aspect is to listen "actively", not passively, using techniques which include:

a) Appropriate "body language" - for example leaning forward slightly with the upper half of the body.

b) Maintaining eye contact.

c) Speaking with a warm, natural voice.

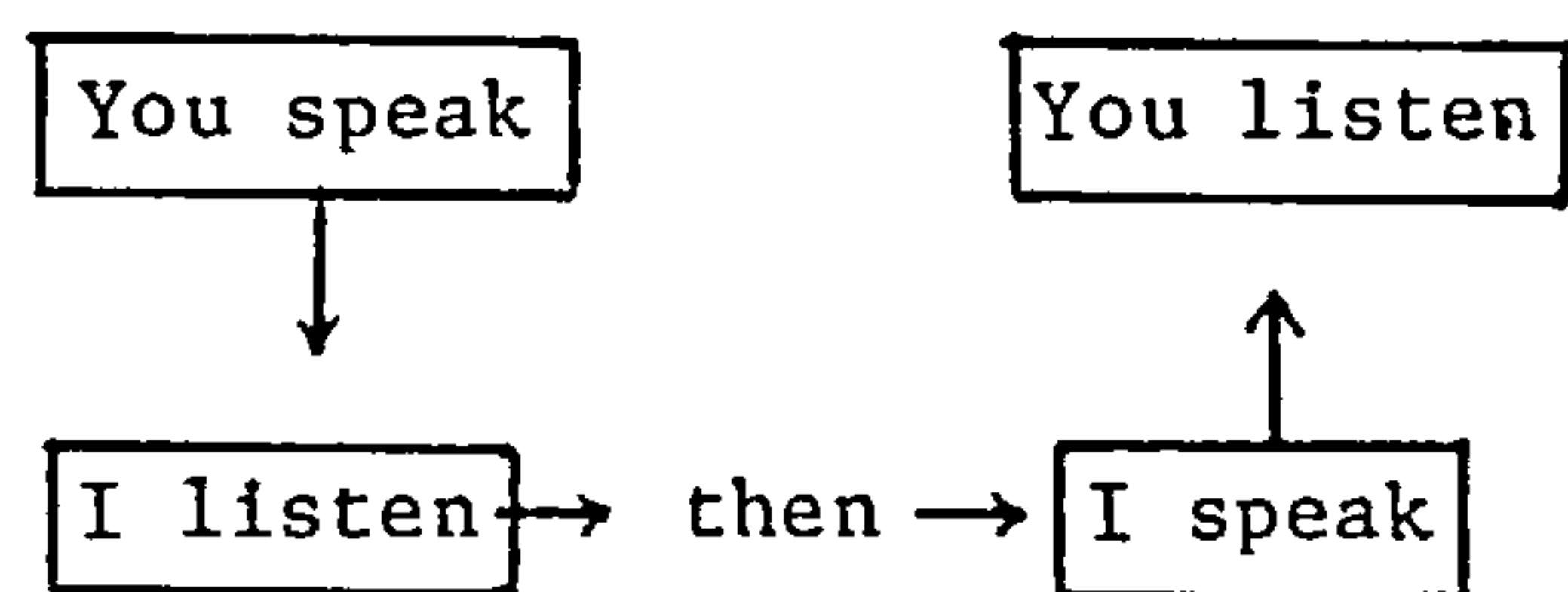
d) Using encouragers - head nods, "Yes's" and "Uh-huh's".

e) Keeping to the topic under discussion.

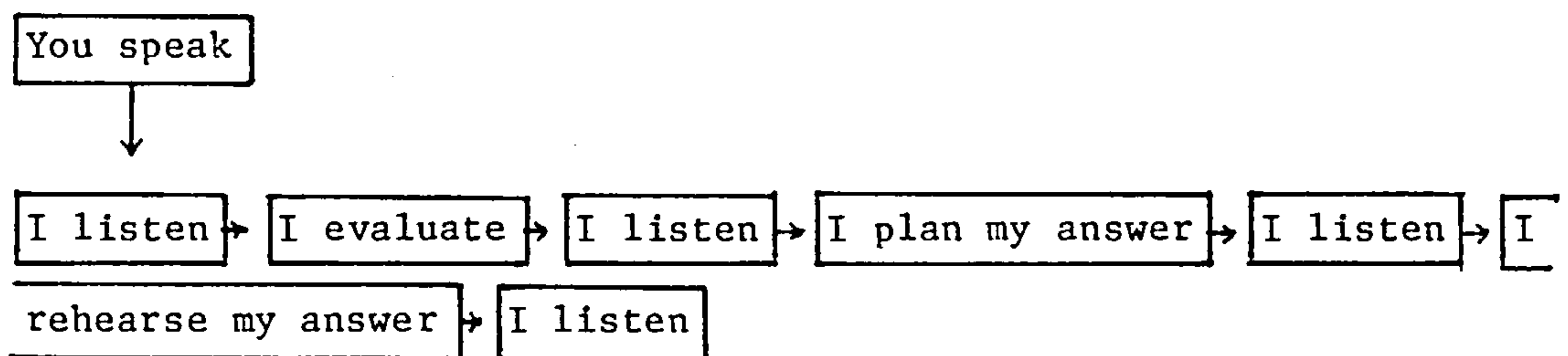
Attending properly indicates to the other that you are attempting to grasp his facts and feelings. Listening attentively enables the participant to notice and explore the significant remark and the significant omission. Even silence needs interpreting. The skilled

listener distinguishes between those that are "awkward" - someone can not decide what to ask next; and "pregnant" - the appraisee puzzles over how to answer an unexpected question. The former type of silence needs breaking, the latter should not be interrupted.

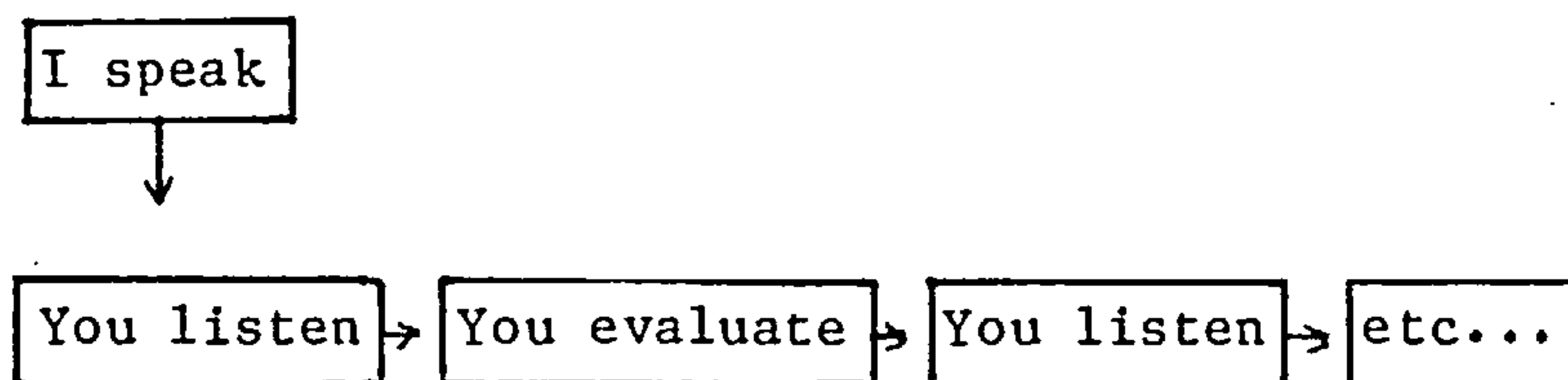
The nature of communication itself provides one of the difficulties of effective listening. The Suffolk team (1987) represented communication as:



But what happens in reality is:



then



While we evaluate and rehearse our answers we are NOT listening, and misunderstandings may occur.

#### 4. Allowing for moods, values, "halo effect", and attribution.

The emotional state or mood of a participant may have a profound effect on his ability to perceive the other's responses - this was part of A5's explanation for the failure of the interview. Haefele (1981), draws attention to the need to be aware of one's biases:

To evaluate teachers and to conduct effective appraisal interviews, it is vitally important that evaluators understand how their values affect their judgements of teaching competence.

Being impressed with or disliking one particular attribute of a person may influence our judgement about other attributes or facts about him - thus the "halo effect". Furthermore, as in many other contexts, in an appraisal interview we make judgements on the basis of the information available, which is itself derived from our own knowledge and beliefs about human nature. As Cave (1985), observes:

The value of interviewing in arriving at judgements about people is controversial, mainly because, in our present state of knowledge anyone can inject his prejudice or his views into the debate without being proved wrong.

Some research work by Fletcher (1984), has focussed on the appraiser's "causal attributions" - the way in which he or she tends to explain good or bad performance. In explaining one's own poor performance we make reference to circumstantial factors, ("external" attribution), (e.g. B4, B5, B11). When explaining other people's behaviour, we have a tendency to see it brought about by the characteristics of the person rather than the situation, ("internal" attribution). Examples of this were seen in interviews 5 and 11,



and were discussed more fully in Chapter Five (sections 5.5 and 5.11), and in Chapter Seven under the heading, "Passing the Buck". Sometimes called the "fundamental attribution error", this is something for appraisal participants to be aware of.

## 5. Questioning

As the major tool of the interviewer, much of the skill of the appraiser lies in the use of carefully phrased questions. The good interviewer will ask the kind of questions which enable the interviewee to talk freely and openly. Categories of questions have been discussed fully in Chapter Seven. To summarise, the use of "open" rather than "closed" questions; and the avoidance of "multiple" and "leading" questions, are part of questioning skill. Appraisers should utilise "probing", "reflective", and "supporting" questions as appropriate.

## 6. Feedback

There is an expectation from appraisees that the appraisal interview is an opportunity to receive feedback about performance. In using feedback skilfully, the appraiser can open up communication channels for appraisee response.

The first component of feedback is that it should involve clear and concrete data, rather than vague, imprecise statements. Secondly, feedback should employ a non-judgemental attitude. Value-laden statements, especially negative ones, can be infectious, and invite a reciprocal emotional response. Thirdly, although an appraisal

interview deals with performance over time, (usually a year), more can be gained by examining more recent problems than by dredging up long past incidents. Choosing the present over the past is a much more powerful tool for change.

Distant Past Feedback: "Your departmental budget has been overspent for the past three years!"

Recent Past Feedback: "In reviewing the departmental budget allocations last week, I found that yours was overspent as usual."

Present-Tense Feedback: "John, we need to talk about your departmental budget. How can I help you become more effective in budget management?"

Finally, feedback should deal with correctable items over which the appraisee has some control. It may be of little good to ask a somewhat shy, but otherwise very effective teacher in the department, "Why don't you spend more time with the gang, and become more a part of the group?"

## 7. Reflection

There are two aspects of reflection which promote effective appraisal interviewing. The first is the paraphrase - a concise restatement of the essence of what the appraisee has said. The emphasis is more upon the cognitive realm of fact than the affective realm of emotion. Effective paraphrasing clarifies for the appraiser, and indicates to the appraisee that you "understand", and it therefore encourages him to go on.

The second aspect is concerned with the reflection of "feeling", and relates to the affective emotions of the appraisee. This skill is

particularly germane to the appraisal interview where pride and fear, trust and suspicion, openness and defensiveness, are easily engendered. To recognise and reflect emotions can free communication and establish a closer rapport and stronger relationship between participants - that fundamental, yet so elusive, pre-requisite for effective human interaction.

Reflective responses can be "confirming" or "disconfirming". Confirming responses acknowledge the other, agree about content, are supportive, and express positive feelings. Conversely, a disconfirming response is one that is irrelevant, tangential, impersonal, incongruent, or simply an inaccurate interpretation of the other's expression of emotion. For example:

Appraisee: "I'd much rather work on my own."

Appraiser: "You feel you don't get along with other people."

Appraisee: "I don't feel any such thing!"

#### Conclusion - The Skills of Interaction

An awareness of the transactional nature of dyadic communication is fundamental to effective appraisal interviewing. Alteration of one person's behaviour produces changes in the other. Therefore, the best way to become more interactively skilled, and thus improve one's performance as an appraiser or appraisee, is to change one's own behaviour. Interactive skills are the skills used in face to face encounters to arrange our behaviour so that it is in step with our objectives. In so far as the other person's judgements about us stem from their observations of our behaviour, it is clear that behaviour matters very much. Amongst several other factors, the

behaviour of participants, notably that of the appraiser, is one of the crucial items that helps to determine success in the interview. The following hypothetical encounter in an appraisal interview illustrates my thesis:

Appraiser: Ben, you've had a difficult year. I must admit that there are several other teachers in the department who, like you, have found it difficult to teach the less able.

Some empathy for Ben's situation is expressed but the implication of the "person" and "other" foci is that the perceived problem is partly Ben's fault. Ben may react negatively:

I feel I have been treated unfairly! I have four bottom set classes and I have to pack up and move rooms at least once each day! By the time I reach the classroom, the pupils are running amock. It takes 15 minutes to calm them down. Nobody has offered any assistance - I don't think the problem is all my fault.

Through misinterpreting previous information, the appraiser has made an "internal" attribution error. He should be prepared to modify his perception in the light of this new information and use it in a constructive way:

In other words, Ben, you feel that you've been placed in a very difficult teaching situation. I can understand your reaction. You've mentioned a major factor I seem to have overlooked.

The appraiser has listened, paraphrased, reflected empathically, altered the focus to "self", and changed his original judgement. Ben is more likely to view this kind of interview as worthwhile, and feel that the appraiser is concerned about the problem and wishes to help. Ben can now begin to react constructively to the problem. Because an important objective of the appraisal interview is to



determine what can be done to improve teaching performance, the appraiser might offer assistance as follows:

Ben, you have been unintentionally placed in a difficult teaching situation. However, what do you think we can do to help you with this problem?

The appraiser not only accepts substantial responsibility for Ben's unsatisfactory performance with the less able classes, but also indicates that a co-operatively developed plan might alleviate this problem. For example, the appraiser agrees to meet two of Ben's classes as they enter the classroom and a more experienced teacher volunteers to cover the other two groups until Ben arrives. Ben is committed to this plan because he had a personal stake in its creation. The key to a satisfactory outcome is the CHANGE in the behaviour of the appraiser.

There is a vital bond between objectives and behaviour. One of the indications of an interactively skilled person is that they frequently declare their objectives, openly and explicitly. Behaviour needs to be in step with objectives and should be consciously organised and controlled to achieve this. Behaviour shaping is a "natural" process anyway - by making it a conscious one we harness the behaviour shaping processes more efficiently.

The essence of interacting, when there are objectives to be achieved in face to face encounters such as appraisal interviews, is to use your own behaviour to influence that of the other. As was seen in the example above, changes in the behaviour of the appraiser will allow the appraisee freedom to change, thereby opening the way to relationship improvement. Indeed, appraisers WANT to change

appraisee behaviour - in the classroom perhaps - by working out a behaviour plan together with them. This is exactly what appraisal interviews are supposed to do.

#### APPRAISER STYLE - SOME UNRESOLVED ISSUES

In any attempt at describing appropriate appraisal interview behaviour, there will be, inevitably, some problems which remain for the participants. Some of these issues are in the nature of dilemmas, for which there is no definitive guidance.

One of the key issues to be highlighted by this research is whether or not there is a place for criticism from the appraiser. The existing research evidence is conflicting.

Meyer et al (1965), found that criticism in an appraisal interview had a negative effect on subsequent goal achievement. In a review of the limitations of traditional methods, Riley (1983), suggests discussing only those areas in which the employee performs well, with no discussion of weaknesses. It is argued that a judgemental approach evokes defensive reactions that may block constructive search for ways of improving. Lusty (1981), found that:

Negative feedback not only fails to motivate, but can cause him to perform worse. Only those employees who have a high degree of self-esteem appear to be stimulated by criticism to improve performance.

On the other hand, Alapander (1980), outlines an approach to handling poor subordinate performance which involves training appraisers to criticise constructively. In a study in the Civil

Service, Fletcher, C. (1973), found that not only did discussion of the weaker areas of the individual's performance seem essential to the full effectiveness of the appraisal in giving accurate performance feedback and generating action; but that it also appears to be an acceptable, even desirable, element of the procedure from the appraisee's standpoint. The results of his study suggest that potentially sensitive topics of performance weakness can be discussed without abandoning a joint problem-solving orientation.

The evidence of the case-study interviews tends to support this view. When criticism was specific, constructive, and sensitively presented, this did not result in any noticeable deterioration in the relationship. In fact greater depth of insight and self-awareness often followed. The absence of any criticism may be worse - a one-sided, sterile and rather bland encounter, perhaps. Thus when interviews are carefully handled, there ought not to be any tension between adopting a supportive, developmental approach, and the raising of contentious issues.

However, appraisers are faced with a conflict of roles. As line managers they are responsible for the work of their staff, and their contribution and effectiveness in relation to the needs of the INSTITUTION. In certain circumstances - for example when promotion is at stake or when redundancies need to be recommended to the Governing Body - appraisers will be required to make judgements about the performance of their staff. The appraisal process is an invaluable source of data, which, even if desirable, it would be impossible to ignore when difficult decisions have to be made. At the same time, appraisers have a legitimate concern with the

professional and personal welfare and development of their staff as INDIVIDUALS. Whilst in many situations organisational needs and individual needs may be complementary, it does not necessarily follow that they will always be - particularly as perceived by the appraisee. This difficulty has been recognised elsewhere:

Inevitably, every leader of and in an organisation must at some time, come face-to-face with the potential dilemma of reconciling their responsibility for the welfare of the staff of that organisation with their responsibility for the continuing development and improvement of its work.

Phillips (1984)

One of the reasons the goal of employee development has not been achieved under many appraisal systems in the past is that the skills required for maximum attainment of these objectives are in conflict with the ongoing system of management practices in those organizations. That is, asking a manager to evaluate a subordinate's performance and recommend positive changes (judging) while simultaneously emphasizing the need to be employee-centred and supportive (helping) would demand a reconciliation of two incompatible systems of management.

Burke and Wilcox (1969)

Cummings and Schwab (1973), (figure 10.3) offer a similar dichotomy of "style":

Wight (1985), explores the difficulties managers face during an appraisal interview when they try to play - simultaneously - the roles of counsellor, ("what the employee needs"), and judge, ("what the employee requires"). He advocates a procedure which deals with these two aspects in different phases of the interview.

The observation that appraisal is both a mechanism for self-improvement and a management tool for achieving other goals was made by a 'respondent':



Figure 10.3    Comparison of Judgemental and Counselling Roles in  
Performance Appraisal

Judgemental Role in Appraisal

Focus:	On past performance
Objective:	Improve performance by reward
Method:	Variety of ranking and rating procedures
Role of Superior:	To judge, to evaluate
Role of Subordinate:	Passive or reactive, frequently to defend himself

Counselling Role in Appraisal

Focus:	On improvement in future performance
Objective:	Improve performance through self-learning and growth
Method:	Series of developmental steps through self-appraisal
Role of Superior:	To counsel, help or guide
Role of Subordinate:	Active involvement in learning

R.10.4: I would have thought, somewhere in the rationale behind it all, was a motive to help staff improve. They're (management) bound to feel that it must be an opportunity to gather the staff into their way of thinking and of doing things. I interpret appraisal as ostensibly self-appraisal - and very good - but management are obviously using it to try to influence what goes on - which is fair enough.

Uncertainty about whether teacher appraisal is going to be judgemental ("hard"), or developmental ("soft"), has bedevilled its introduction. Pratt and Stenning (1989) write:

The apparent incongruence between formative and summative assessment was at the heart of the controversy about the introduction of staff appraisal into schools.

The evidence of this, and other research; the six pilot studies; and the recommendations of the National Steering Group; all point very clearly to the conclusion that formative appraisal with a supportive, developmental, counselling interview style is the most effective.

### Summary

In this chapter I have discussed the implications of this research in relation to two areas: TRAINING and GOOD PRACTICE.

The need for training in appraisal interviewing skills is widely recognised, both inside and outside the education sector, for a number of reasons. Firstly, the interview is the heart of the appraisal process - it is the event which may, or may not, motivate the appraisee to improve performance. Secondly, appraisal interviews are not easy to do well and an understanding of what

takes place in these encounters is a vital pre-requisite. Thirdly, at the present time there is a dearth of training in appraisal interviewing skills.

In reviewing the training methods that are available, I have argued that role playing techniques are the most effective - especially when they allow appraisers to experience the role of appraisee. There is evidence that this kind of experiential training is successful.

An appraisal interview is not conducted in a vacuum. This description of good practice has made reference to necessary pre-conditions. These include an appropriate organisational context; an awareness that the interview has affective, functional, and relational dimensions; and a commitment to the necessary preparatory and follow up work.

In an effective interview the behaviour of appraisers and appraisees have certain general characteristics. These features can be thought of as the "outcome" of the application of process skills. For appraisers in particular, these skills include the ability to: establish rapport, manage the interview, attend sensitively, use questions appropriately, give feedback properly, and apply reflective skills. Most importantly, there must be an awareness of the fact that interaction is essentially transactional, and that behaviour in the interview should be modified to meet objectives.

Interaction process skills and necessary pre-conditions are inextricably linked. The experience of the appraisee in an

appraisal interview is holistic. It is a function of BOTH his and the interviewer's behaviour, and the institution's policies. The style of the interview reflects the style of the organisation.

Appraisal is not so much a management technique as a management philosophy.

Beveridge (1975)

To be effective, an appraisal interview has implications for appraiser behaviour and the nature of relationships and communication throughout the organisation. Important though it is, there is more to appraisal training than interactive competence alone:

Given time, however, most of the skills of appraisal can be taught. These include setting a climate based upon mutual trust, and setting objectives which are clearly defined, agreed to be feasible, with an agreed priority, and a time target. Performance and measurement criteria must both be understood. The skills involve writing meaningful job descriptions and the skills of listening - reflecting feelings, paraphrasing, leading, acknowledging, using silence.

Trethowan (1985)

In Lewinian terms, behaviour in an appraisal interview is very much a function of "person" and "environment". Person factors include the skills and attitudes of the participants. Environmental forces comprise the organisational context or supra-system in which the interview takes place.

The essence of good practice in an appraisal interview is when interactively skilled participants are able to combine a developmental interview style with a complementary organisational culture.



## Chapter Eleven

### CONCLUSION

## Chapter Eleven CONCLUSION

### RESEARCH SYNOPSIS

This research is based on the premise that the appraisal INTERVIEW is not only the cornerstone of the scheme in the study school, but that it will also form the key activity in any nationally or locally prescribed system. The central aim of this study has been to find out what takes place in teacher appraisal interviews. The rationale for this investigation is that training in the complex interactional skills of appraisal interviewing must derive from a description of good practice which is based upon evidence.

In setting the context for this research in Chapter Two, attention has been drawn to developments in appraisal at national, local, and institutional levels. The common features of existing schemes have been reviewed; the purposes of staff appraisal, and the alleged benefits and drawbacks, have been outlined.

The limitations of this research are methodological, and the dilemmas associated with case-study research were discussed in Chapter Three. For example, audio-taping the interviews is not totally unobtrusive since it clearly influences the selection of the pairs as well as the behaviour of the actors. The significance of generalities is seriously affected by small sample size.

Interpretive research is subject to reactive errors and researcher bias. Nevertheless, given the nature of the phenomenon under scrutiny, the most appropriate research techniques have been employed.

The case-study interviews have been described and analysed in Chapter Five in terms of both the content and process. As a distinct entity each encounter offers its unique insights into the nature of interaction in a teacher appraisal interview.

The key findings of this research are presented fully in Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight, but can be summarised with the following precis:

The subject matter (content) of the sample appraisal interviews varies considerably although commonly the discussions centre around the professional concerns of the individual appraisee - particularly those related to his or her teaching activity - and more general dissatisfactions such as a shortage of time. Many of the content categories, for example discussion of career development, occurred in only a few of the interviews. The content analysis has highlighted a number of issues or questions. For example, to what extent is discussion of the appraisee's private life, or other members of staff, appropriate; and should appraisers use the interview to gain feedback on their innovations?

The analysis of verbal interaction has shown that the role behaviour of appraisers and appraisees in the sample interviews is consistent. Appraisers tend to exhibit friendliness and warmth towards the appraisees, ask for opinions, and share their own views. Appraisees talk for most of the time in the interviews and they tend to adopt a more cautious attitude. They give opinions freely, and reciprocate the positive emotional acts from appraisers. As a result, negative

relational activity is virtually absent from the case-study interviews. Interview number 5 represents an atypical encounter in almost every respect.

Appraisers accept responsibility for directing the interview, and the proforma is used to help some provide a structure or agenda for the interview. Appraisers vary in the extent to which they are prepared to risk upsetting the emotional equilibrium of the interview with more penetrating questions or constructive criticism. However, it was found that when such activity did take place it led to a more meaningful experience, although some appraisees would use defence mechanisms to avoid discussing contentious areas.

The use of theoretical perspectives has augmented the significance of these research findings. The influence of personality factors, and the transactional nature of dyadic interaction, have a pervading effect on the actions of participants. Of considerable importance also, is the assertion that the behaviour of interviewer and interviewee is explained largely with reference to the fact that they are playing out the roles of appraiser and appraisee. It was shown that a dramaturgical perspective provides an appropriate language for describing the performance of the participants.

Interaction in the appraisal interview is understood through the concept of homeostasis. There exists a compelling force - sometimes ritualistic - to secure stability - with the implication that, for an appraisal dyad to keep functioning, each of its members must fulfil his particular role. 'Relational' activity keeps the encounter in equilibrium and permits the task to be achieved.



The need for training in the skills of appraisal interviewing has been argued in Chapter Ten. In a description of what constitutes good appraiser practice, it was concluded that effective interviewers display genuine regard for appraisees and show faith in their capacity to develop. They demonstrate a willingness to share their own thoughts and feelings, have a capacity for empathic understanding, and display congruence in their communicative exchanges. In short, they possess all of the necessary SKILLS of interpersonal communication which have been outlined.

The case-study interviews have shown that the hallmark of the effective appraisee lies in the extent to which he or she can engage in voluntary disclosure - this is the essence of SELF-appraisal.

The Johari Awareness Model or Window (developed by JOseph Luft and HARRY Ingham), helps to visualise the problem, (figure 11.1).

In an appraisal interview each person's representative awareness model would have different relative proportions of the four quadrants. Some appraisees, (notably B2/B2a and B3/B4), were willing to make a large portion of their feelings and views known to the appraiser, and were seen to be adept at self-appraisal. Their Johari Awareness Model could be portrayed as follows:

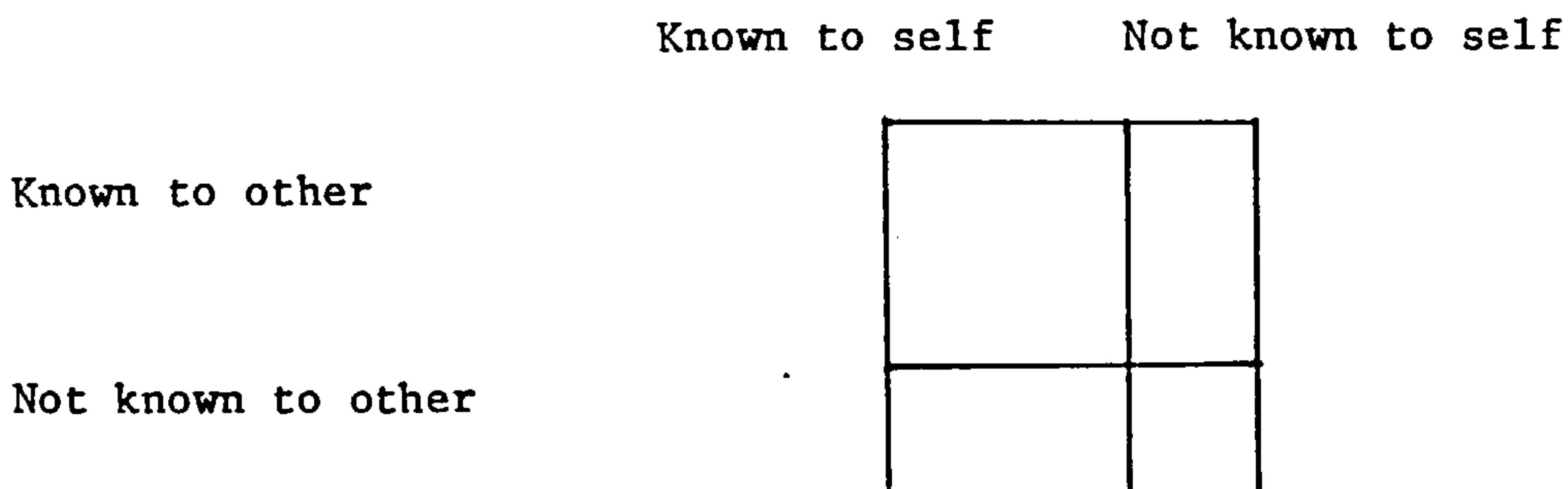


Figure 11.1 The Johari Awareness Model

The plan of the Awareness Model is described by Joseph Luft (1969) as follows:

The four quadrants represent the total person in relation to the other person. The basis for division into quadrants is awareness of behaviour, feelings, and motivation. Sometimes awareness is shared, sometimes not. An act, a feeling, or a motive is assigned to a particular quadrant based on who knows about it. As awareness changes, the quadrant to which the psychological state is assigned changes.

Quadrant 1, the "OPEN" quadrant, refers to behaviour, feelings, and motivation known to SELF and to the OTHER.

Quadrant 2, the "BLIND" quadrant, refers to that which is known to the OTHER but not SELF.

Quadrant 3, the "HIDDEN" quadrant, refers to that which is known to SELF but not to the OTHER.

Quadrant 4, the "UNKNOWN" quadrant, refers to that which is known neither to SELF nor to the OTHER.

	Known to self	Not known to self
Known to other	<div>1 OPEN</div>	<div>2 BLIND</div>
Not Known to other	<div>HIDDEN 3</div>	<div>UNKNOWN 4</div>

Other appraisers (for example, B9 and B10), were more reluctant to share feelings and attitudes about themselves with their appraiser, which could be illustrated as:

	Known to self	Not known to self
Known to other		
Not Known to other		

The Johari Model is an interesting way of depicting the dynamics of an appraisal interview as it affects participants, especially appraisees. Interpersonal learning means that a change has taken place so that quadrant 1 is larger - this surely encapsulates the PURPOSE of a self-appraisal interview. The appraiser wishes to expand quadrant 1, yet he recognises the need to remain sensitive to the covert aspects in quadrants 2, 3, and 4 and respect the desire of the appraisee to keep them so. What the good appraiser does is to help the appraisee unfold quadrant 1, and open a "window" into his own self-knowledge. This is what characterised the behaviour of A2/A2a/A7 and A11.

#### A TYPOLOGY OF TEACHER APPRAISAL INTERVIEWS

Maier (1976), has classified appraisal interviews into three types:

1. TELL & SELL - supervisor lets the employee know how he/she is doing and gains the employee's acceptance of the evaluation.
2. TELL & LISTEN - supervisor communicates the evaluation and waits for a response.

3. PROBLEM SOLVING - supervisor adopts a 'helper' approach. The goal is the development of the employee's performance through negotiation.

The appraisal interviews at the study school correspond most closely to Maier's 'problem solving' type. Furthermore, the case-study interviews reflect very well the emerging consensus of a teacher appraisal model which emphasises professional development and growth. Its characteristics have been described in Chapters Two and Ten, and they include being school-based, "bottom-up" schemes, with self-evaluation and self-motivation for improvement as the main goals. It exists within a climate of organisational trust and mutual respect between appraisers and appraisees. The evidence suggests that the study school interviews take place within this kind of cultural context.

However, within this generalised model, and on the basis of case-study evidence, it is possible to postulate two 'types' of teacher appraisal interview:

Type X: The "ENABLING" Interview

Type Y: The "MECHANISTIC" Interview

Figure 11.2 illustrates how this pair varies according to a number of dimensions.

The division does not represent extreme types. Rather they are sub-sets of the developmental model that has been described above.



Figure 11.2 A Typology of Teacher Appraisal Interviews

Interview Dimension	Type X:ENABLING	Type Y:MECHANISTIC
Interpersonal Style	Personal	Impersonal
Transactional Relationship	Complementary	Crossed
Awareness of Other	Empathic	Distanced
Degree of 'inclusion'	High	Moderate
Focus	Self (Appraisee)	Context
Questioning Style	Dynamic	Restricted
Approach to Criticism	Constructive	Avoidance
Interview Pace	Permissive	Routine
Commitment to System	Belief	Indifference
Appraiser Role	Counsellor	Manager
Appraisee Role	Client	Subordinate

## Type X: ENABLING

Interviews 2, 2a, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 11 could be classified as 'enabling' interviews, since they display some or all of the following characteristics.

Genuine interaction takes place with no hint of submerged tension. There is a strong relational bond between the participants. Real attempts at developmental steps are made with a joint problem solving orientation. The discussion is intense and often animated. Participants are attentively listening, and fully involved in discussion. The interview has an organic quality. Participants leave with a feeling of satisfaction and a sense of achievement.

The following 'respondent' comments reflect the kind of appraisal experience where appraisers facilitate or "enable" authentic self-appraisal.

R.11.1: The thing I like most about appraisal is that I do use it very selfishly. I actually don't care what anyone else makes of it. I find it useful in that . . . you do actually assess yourself.

R.11.2: I think they (appraisal interviews) are valuable because they (appraisers) have made us look at ourselves. It makes us very aware of ourselves, not just at that particular time, but throughout the year. I think it makes you aware of others, and I think it makes you aware of yourself, and I think that's very important.

## Type Y: MECHANISTIC

Interview numbers 1, 6, 9, and 10 would fall into this category. In this type, the avoidance of relational tension and the formal

completion of the task, are the main characteristics. There may be a subliminal atmosphere of indifference and cynicism. Participants will "go through the motions" but there is a latent lack of faith in the process. There may be a very half-hearted attempt to enlarge quadrant 1 of the 'Johari Window'. The outcomes are largely superficial and participants leave the interview with feelings of relief or frustration. The following 'respondent' comments exemplify the experience of a MECHANISTIC interview.

R.11.3: I suppose I've been a bit of a reluctant candidate in a way - partly because of my reservations about the system, and partly I think because of my own tendency not to be very good at self-appraisal. I think I know my weaknesses but I don't feel particularly happy about talking about them.

R.11.4: I can remember sitting there thinking: I'm talking here and I'm going through it and I'm aware that this is some little management strategy that they think is wonderful . . . but actually it's not.

The distinction between ENABLING and MECHANISTIC teacher appraisal types may be envisaged more usefully as a continuum, with the case-study interviews located as follows. (This typology does not allow for the atypical behaviour seen in interview number 5 however.)

ENABLING						MECHANISTIC				
7	11	2	2a	4	3	8	10	6	1	9

The theoretical constructs that have been developed in this thesis are simply tools which aid our understanding of the subtle processes at work in the teacher appraisal interview. Their value lies in the extent to which they make sense of a complex reality. Much of our behaviour in personal interactions depends upon our attitudes

regarding people and our KNOWLEDGE of what makes people behave in the way that they do.

The explanations offered here will hopefully assist teachers in clarifying their interviewing philosophy. They may also inspire behaviour modification, as we pinpoint behaviours we would like to emulate.



## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1

### DETAILS OF THE STAFF APPRAISAL SCHEME AT THE STUDY SCHOOL

The Staff Appraisal will follow a similar pattern to previous years. Subject teachers will be interviewed by the Faculty Head of their main subject, Tutors by Year Heads (or their deputies in the case of years 2, 3, 4, & 5.)

Heads of Faculty by Deputy Head (Academic)

Heads of Year and their Deputies/Assistants by Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Deputies and Senior Teachers and those with new responsibilities by Headteacher

Headteacher by the Governors (at least once a Term!)

1. Interviewers should arrange dates and times for their interviews. If the interviewee has an office or quiet 'box', the interview should take place there.
2. The attached sheets should be completed and handed to the interviewers as detailed. (These papers should be kept under confidential cover at all times).
3. Last year's appraisals are returned herewith. All papers should be given to the relevant interviewer in time for them to read before the interview.
4. The Interview Report may be full or it may be an update of the previous one. In the latter instance a copy of the previous interview report should be returned with this year's report. Whilst a written report is made, the interview is far more important than the report.

Once written, the report should be given to the interviewee, for consideration for at least 24 hours before being signed by both parties. Agreed alterations may be made at this time. If there is a disagreement which cannot be readily resolved, the interviewee should write a footnote. Both parties may then be invited to discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

It is important that everyone involved understands:

- a) Appraisals are to help people with their professional development and should be constructive.
- b) Appraisals are strictly for School use only and are not shown to advisers. L.E.A. Officers, Governors etc.
- c) Last year's appraisal is returned to you to destroy, keep or pass back for filing.

Appendix 1 continued

PROFORMA (Pastoral)

This form is a guide and assistance to the appraisal process.  
Please complete Sections A and B.

Use of Section C is voluntary, but the self appraisal may help you  
and your interviewer.

Interviewers may use the "Comments" column or write a separate  
report.

This form should be passed to interviewers at least 24 hours before  
the interview.

After the report is written it should be signed by both parties and  
passed to . . . . .

SELF APPRAISAL

INTERVIEWER'S COMMENTS

Section A - The year past:

1. Successes.
2. Satisfactions.
3. Problems.
4. Dissatisfactions.
5. Frustrations.

Section B - The year ahead:

6. Plans and targets.
7. Help and support sought.
8. Longer term ideas and plans.

Section C

9. Care and welfare of pupils in  
Tutor Group/Year.
10. Tutorial curriculum.
11. Register and general admin.
12. Reports and records.
13. Care of room etc.
14. Insistence on high standards both  
in tutor room and elsewhere.
15. Contribution to the "hidden curriculum".
16. Contribution to Year team discussions.

## APPENDIX 2

### SUMMARY OF INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO SCORE THE CATEGORIES FOR INTERACTION PROCESS ANALYSIS (after Bales)

1. Seems Friendly - raises other's status, gives help, overt positive acts, pleasantries, e.g. "I can see how you feel", "You've done a good job".
2. Shows Tension Release - jokes, laughs, humourous remarks. Score whenever an element of dramatisation or fantasy is present. Frivolous or nonsensical remarks.
3. Agrees - shows passive acceptance, concurs, complies, any sign of recognition e.g. "Yes, that's true", "I hope so too", "That's right".
4. Gives Suggestion - direction, includes procedural, "Can we take a look at? ", as well as substantive suggestions, "I propose that we look into that". Suggestions should be neutral, neither positive or negative in feeling.
5. Gives Opinion - expresses feeling, wish, evaluation, all verbalisations of the processes of thought leading to an understanding or insight, "I think it might be ..."
6. Gives Information - clarifies, confirms. Potentially broad but confined to neutral, factual, non-inferential, objective remarks, e.g. "I handed in my reports last week".
7. Asks for Information - a question requesting factual, descriptive, objective answer based upon experience, observation or research.
8. Asks for Opinion - anything encouraging a reaction without limiting the response except in a very general way, "What do you think ..."
9. Asks for Suggestion - direction, possible ways of action, turning the initiative to the other. "I wonder what we can do about this?"
10. Disagrees - shows passive rejection, an act with negative implications. It conveys the information to the other that what he says is not acceptable, "I don't think so", "I can't accept that ..."
11. Shows Tension - anything that shows anxiety, dismay, alarm, hesitation, apprehension.
12. Seems Unfriendly - deflates others's status, defends or asserts self, overt negative acts even if minimal.



Appendix 2 continued

SUMMARY OF PRIORITY RULES FOR SCORING

- a) Give priority to SHOWS TENSION RELEASE and SHOWS TENSION over a scoring in any other category.
- b) Give priority to SEEMS FRIENDLY or SEEMS UNFRIENDLY if an element of interpersonal feeling is present, especially to acts that would otherwise be GIVES OPINION or GIVES INFORMATION.
- c) Give priority to GIVES SUGGESTION over GIVES OPINION and ASKS FOR SUGGESTION over ASKS FOR OPINION.
- d) After an initial act of AGREEMENT or DISAGREEMENT the scoring reverts to neutral categories.

The general effect of these rules is to divert the classification of utterances that tend to be most frequent - in the form giving opinion and information, into the less frequently used categories which depend upon more subtle cues and are of greater diagnostic interest. This is particularly important when classifying from a recording, because the emotional 'tone' of a remark is more difficult to detect.

## APPENDIX 3

### SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

#### Structural/Organisational Aspects

1. During your time at the case-study school, how many appraisal interviews have you been involved in:

- a) as an appraiser
- b) as an appraisee

2. How long do appraisal interviews last?

How is this affected by:

- a) The length of the school period?
- b) The amount of information filled in on the proforma?
- c) Other factors?

3. What, in your view, is the ideal length for an appraisal interview?

4. In your experience who speaks for more of the time?

appraiser

appraisee

equal

Who should speak the most?

5. In your experience, to what extent, if any, do the 'headings' on the proforma structure the content of the interview or influence what is said? (Respondents are given a copy of the proforma as a reminder)

6. In your experience who has determined the content of the interview?

Who should determine it?

7. In your experience who 'controls' (takes charge of, decides when to move onto the next item) the interview?

Who should control it?

8. In your experience, what have been the main differences between the 'pastoral' and 'academic' interviews?

Appendix 3 continued

9. In your experience, what are the differences between those whose main responsibility is classroom teaching as opposed to those who have managerial responsibilities?
10. Do appraisers tend to use mostly 'open' or 'closed' questions?
11. Can you recall any examples of 'leading' questions?
12. In your experience, how do appraisal interviews usually begin?
13. How would you describe appraisal interviews in terms of pace - (e.g. as 'fast-moving' or 'slow-moving' encounters?)

Questions relating to content/topics

14. In your experience, what are the main topics of conversation in appraisal interviews?

Which do you think should be the major legitimate topics?

Which topics do you consider are inappropriate for an appraisal interview?

Can you describe any occasions when issues have been raised that were not itemised on the proforma?

Is this acceptable in your view?

15. Can you give me the details of any incident when a third party, other than a pupil, was the focus of discussion?

Is discussion of other members of staff appropriate?

16. Can you describe occasions when your career development has been discussed?

How important is this item in appraisal discussions?

17. If items of job dissatisfaction have been discussed, what have been the main areas raised?

18. In your experience, how has the topic of classroom control or discipline been discussed?

Do you regard this as a legitimate topic for an appraisal interview?

19. As an appraisee, can you describe occasions when your appraiser used the interview specifically to praise you for work done?

Do you think interviews should be used for this purpose?

Appendix 3 continued

20. Can you describe occasions when the appraiser used the interview to gain feedback from you about something he/she had initiated?

Is that an acceptable purpose of appraisal?

Questions relating to process/behaviour

21. What sort of appraisal items secure the highest level of agreement between participants?

22. Can you describe incidents of disagreement in the interview?

23. In general terms, how would you describe the emotional/personal stance taken by appraisers towards appraisees?

24. In general terms, how would you describe the emotional/personal stance taken by appraisees towards appraisers?

25. Can you recall examples of constructive criticism?

What was the effect of this upon the appraisee?

26. Can you describe incidents when criticism had a destructive effect on the interview?

27. How can you tell whether the other person is listening attentively? What clues/signals do you look for?

28. Can you describe incidents when the atmosphere was 'tense'?

How do participants respond in such circumstances?

29. Can you describe occasions when you wished you could have probed more deeply into an issue?

What held you back?

30. Can you recall humorous incidents?

What effect did these have on the interview?

31. How should an appraiser respond to emotionally loaded comments?

Can/should he/she take sides?

32. In your experience, to what extent do the 'personalities' of the participants affect the interview?

Can you illustrate this?

33. Have you experienced an appraisal interview as a kind of therapy session?



Appendix 3 continued

Should this be an objective?

34. Can you describe occasions when serious problems/difficulties faced by the appraisee were being discussed?

Do participants tend to blame themselves or 'situational' (contextual) forces?

35. How do teachers who are participating in the appraisal interview for the first time behave differently from those who have engaged in a number of interviews?

36. How important is a well established existing professional relationship for the success of an interview?

37. How important is an existing 'personal' relationship for the success of an interview?

General Questions

38. Can you describe a performance improvement that you attribute to the experience of the appraisal interview?

39. How would you describe the main characteristics of the role of:

a) The appraiser

b) The appraisee

40. How do you feel about the training that you have had as:

a) An appraiser

b) An appraisee

What sort of training would you like?

41. Do you have any other observations/insights about appraisal interviews that you would like to share with me?

## APPENDIX 4

### NOTES ON CONDUCTING THE APPRAISAL INTERVIEW IN THE STUDY SCHOOL

#### 1. Prepare thoroughly

Review all records and previous history.

Ensure you are familiar with the system.

Gather all the facts about past performance and future developments where appropriate.

#### 2. Ensure the appraisee is prepared

Give at least a week's notice of the meeting.

Ensure that the purpose of the meeting is clear to your subordinate and that he/she has faith in the system.

#### 3. Get the environment right

A private place - office, classroom, stroll around the field, home, where?

No interruptions.

Plenty of time - do not break appointments except in emergency.

A relaxed atmosphere.

#### 4. Plan the meeting

What do you want to achieve?

How are you going to achieve it?

In what order will you deal with the areas to be covered?

Always end on a high note.

a) Review: Past performance

b) Agree: Performance improvement plan and new objectives.

c) Discuss: Development in existing job and in a new job if appropriate.

#### 5. Techniques to use at the meeting

a) Let the job holder identify problem areas for himself

#### Appendix 4 continued

Ask don't tell unless absolutely necessary, e.g. what went wrong?  
not: you failed there. You will often find that people are very  
critical of themselves and do it all for you.

b) Be constructive at all times - if things went wrong - what can we  
do about it in the future?

c) Be receptive - listen to the other person's point of view - he  
may know something you don't. Never assume anything.

d) Be open - if you are at fault in any way, be prepared to admit  
it. If you can be open, this encourages the other party to be open  
in return.

e) Be interested - never appear bored or preoccupied: this is a  
great insult to the individual concerned.

f) Be objective - everything you say should be related to FACTS. If  
you haven't any evidence don't say it. If you say "I've a feeling  
you're not pulling your weight in the department", the immediate  
response is to say "On what evidence?" Make sure you've got some  
and not just 'a feeling'.

g) Be specific - never generalise

"You are arrogant" is a total condemnation. It describes your  
opinion of a personality trait.

"You upset Mrs X last week by the way you spoke to her" is a  
specific instance of behaviour.

It is possible to change behaviour. It is very difficult to change  
personality.

Limit your remarks to behaviour not personality.

h) Be committed to help in any way you can - without taking the job  
over yourself, that is. If you promise training, guidance etc.,  
make sure it happens.

Remember the ultimate goal of all appraisals is performance  
improvement.

#### 6. Follow up:

Arrange further discussion if necessary.

Arrange for relevant action to be taken.

Complete written report carefully, honestly and with regard to the  
discussion held.

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